CHANGING INTERPRETATIONS OF MILTON'S POETRY TILL 1950

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CERTIFICATE

This is to Certify that Rafique Ahmad Ansari has worked under my supervision and submitted a thesis entitled "Changing Interpretations of Milton's Poetry Till 1950" for the award of D.Phil degree of University of Allahabad.

This work is original and has not been submitted for any degree else where, I, therefore, recomend for the submission of the thesis.

O.P. Malaviya

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Research Scholar

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PREFACE

Like the other well known classics of world literature, Milton has also stamped the seal of finality on English literature. Undoubtedly, being a colossal figure of English literature, his works are capable of yielding an exhaustible meaning and are a perennial source of aesthetic pleasure. Consequently, there always is a need for re-interpretation and revaluation of his works.

Thus this humble work is an invitation to the reading of Milton and a refreshing attempt at revaluation of a Poet whose uniqueness as a Renaissance poet and thinker has been examined through the centuries in terms of a variety of changing critical perspective. So I have sought to collect and examine the different and sometimes even conflicting interpretation of Milton's poetry in the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th century. Though there is not much critical material available in the 17th century, yet beginning has been made from an account of the contemporary attention which were paid to Milton's work.

The proposed study entitled "changing interpretations of Milton's poetry till 1950" has seven chapters.

In the first chapter I have discussed in detail about the concept of Milton's peotry, that he had a very high concept of poetry and he had given expression to it even in his early works. "Lycidas" the abilities of the poet are the inspired gift of God rarely bestowed. Thus his high conception of peotry has been recognised and commented upon by the critics.

The second one deals with his reputation and influence during the course of centuries. Milton has been regarded as the greatest English poet after Shakespeare though opinions are sharply divided on certain aspects of his poetry, his stature as a poet is unassailable. He was recognised as a great poet even in his own life time as Dryden's tribute quoted. In the last quarter of the 17th century a definite Miltonic tradition had come to be recognised. As the poetic tribute of Andrew Marvell and Dryden are evident.

Eighteenth century was a period of universal recognition and the 'sublime quality' of his poetry was specially admired.Gray's line from the "progress of poesy" discribes.

In the romantic age Milton's poetical achievements were highly admired. But the though-

content of his works was ignored. Milton's influence on some of the great poets -- is evident.

In the twentieth century, Milton's poetry became a subject of sharp controversy and the views of Milton's admirers and detractors have been examined in detail.

The third chapter depicts about Milton's poetic style. From the very beiginning of Milton's criticism, his style has been a matter of sharp controversy. Addison and Dr. Johnson, who praised Paradise Lost, criticised Milton's style. Keats was also critical of the style of Milton s Paradise Lost. Mathew Arnold applauded Milton's style and described it a "grand style" and remarked it with style of virgil and Dante. While his style has been assailed by many well known critics like Ezra pound, Middleton Murry, Herbert Read, Bonamy Dobree, F.R. Leavis, Lucas and T.S. Eliot. Though T.S. Eliot was critical of Milton's style in the beginning, later on he recanted. In this way thorough scrutiny has been made in this connection.

The fourth chapter, deals with the sublimity in Milton's poetry. The elements of sublimity in Milton's poetry were noted early in the eighteenth

century though there was considerable difference about what really constituted sublimity. Addison, colridge, Grierson even Dr. Johnson, the detractor of Milton found the elements of sublimity in his peotry.

The fifth one discuss the use of Blank verse in Paradise Lost Book I & II and Samson Agonistes. No doubt, Milton achieved the perfect mastery over his blank verse and freely handled it without diminishing its dignity and grandeur. T.S. Eliot comments that he is the greatest master in our language of freedom with in form. According to Hazlitt, Milton's blank verse in the language except Shakespear deserves the name of verse only. Saintsbury, T.S. Eliot, Helen Derbishire and Hazlitt sang the praise of Milton's blank verse. Really Milton made a splendied use of the freedom and variety which blank verse allows and the manner in which he did, it defies analysis and has excelled all other poets in handling blank verse. We can have an idea of his mastery of blank verse when we compare the concluding lines of Paradise Lost with their five regular accents, with the concluding lines of Samson Agonistes.

The sixth Chapter describes the portrayal

of Satan by Milton. There has been a heated controversy as to who is the real Hero of Paradise Lost. Inspite of sharp controversies among the critics about the theme of Paradise Lost. It is undeniable that the character of Satan has been drawn in a powerful manner. Satan is the figure of heroic magnitude and of an heroic energy as Addison accepts.

In the romantic period Satan's character was universally admired by William Blake, colridge, Shelly, Byron and William Hazlitt.

However, 20th century critics like Abercrombie, Bagehot, Legouis etc. have also admired the character of Satan. Thus the dominant and towering personality of Satan is striking and impresses upon our mind. He is endowed with some of those qualities that make the hero of an epic.

The last chapter throws light on Paradise Lost as an epic and autobiographical elements in Paradise Lost and Samson Agoniestes have been discussed. Milton's Paradise Lost is not a national epic like Illiad or the Aenied. It is an epic of the whole human species--an epic of our entire planet or indeed of the entire astronomical universe. It has a wider scope and larger significance than

either the Illiad or the Aenied, because it deals with the whole human race and indicates the destiny of all humanity through the sin of the first man created by God. Paradise Lost is an classical epic and it possesses all the essential characteristics that Aristotle demanded of an epic poem. As far as the autobiographical elements are concerned, he revealed himself in all his works whether he was writing an ode or an elegy or an epic a masque or a drama. Colridge points out that John Milton is in every line of Paradise Lost. The whole poem is coloured by the personality of Milton. As legouis remarks that Milton is, in truth the only being who exists in his own work. He projects himself his feelings, knowledge and aspiration into the characters of his epic, both the primitive human creatures and the super human beings whether elestial or infernal.

Some of the most famous critics and poets of the Romantic age, both in England or Germany, were actually aware of Milton's personality in paradise lost. His views on women as expressed in paradise lost are more or less coloured by the circumstances of his own personal life. It has been recognised by almost all the critics that the personality of Milton is reflected most

in his portrayal of Satan.

There are some critics for whome the personal or the autobiographical elements in Samson Agonistes is its great charm. In fact, Samson Agonistes the last great work of Milton, may be regarded as his last confession. The various elements of Samson's life have a remarkable similarity with many details of Milton's personal life. Milton's blindness, his unhappy marriage with Mary Powell, his championship of the puritan cause, the old age of a defeated champion, fallen on evil days, the sense of physical helplessness, England in the possession of Philistine and he a stranger in it surrounded by foes, his hopes, crushed but his faith remaining invincible all these find their parallel in the life and character of Samson. As Denis Saurat observes that Milton is more intimately present is Samson Agonistes than in any of his other poems. Hence he has put the history of his own life in his out put.

MILTON'S CONCEPT OF

POETRY

"MILTON'S CONCEPT OF POETRY"

It has been a matter of endless discussion among the critics on the function of pöetry and there has been considerable controversy on it. Many eminent and distinguished scholars had exprssed different views, Plato thought that the function of Poetry was to instruct, Aristotle to delight, Horace voted for both instrunct and delight, Longinus to transpot, Sidny to teach and delight, Benjonson to truth.

Drydon emphasised delight and transport rather than enstruction on the chief end of poetry. Johnson also Lays stress on the moral aspect of poetry that it must instruct. Pattison has rightly said "Poems that were raised from the heat of youth, or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from th pen of some vulgar amorist, or the tencher furry of a rhyming parasite, were in his eyes treachery to the poats high vocation''[1].

No doubt Milton had a very high concept of poetry. According to him the poet is divinely enspired and capable of persuading people to a life of dedication and virtue. Milton has given his views on poetry in these golden words.

"These abilities of the poet where soever they

found ar the inspired gift of God rarely bestowed"[2]

On the other hand, he expressed his much anxiety in respect of vulgar outputs of poets who pens amorus verses in order to get cheap popularity. Such poets are not true to the high and noble ideals of poetry.

> "Alas what boots it with incessant care
> To tend the homly slighted shepherd's trade,
> And structly meditate the thankless muse,
> Were it not better done as other use".[3]

Poetry as a source of recreation and delight to the readers was givn a very low place in Milton's concept of poetry. For him, the poets should after the seeds of virtue and guide the people in noble and righteous conduct. The aim of poetry is, therefore, quite high idealistic. As Milton writes.

"Teaching over the whole book of sanctity and virtue through all instances of examples with such delight to those especially of soft and delivious temper who will not so much as look upon truth herself, unless they see her elgantly drest, that whereas the paths of honesty and good life appear now rugged and difficult, though they be indeed easy and pleasant. They would then appear to all men both easy and pleasant though they were rugged and difficult indeed".[4]

In this way, in the Reason of Church Government we find out Milton's poetic ambition. As early on 1638 he had expressed his ambition to write an epic poem about king Arthur. But he thought of the various possibilities; an epic poem whereof the two poems of Homer and those of other Two of Virgil and Tasso are a diffuse and th book of job a brief model a play in, the Greek manner or magnific odes and hymns in the manner of pindar or Callimachus. For him there was this question also, whether he should write an epic according to Aristotle's rule or to follow nature, and what pre-cenquest hero he might choose on the patron of a Chistian hero. At first he decidd to leave for descendants an immortal and eternal work of poetry he mediated a national epic on the lagends of pre-historic England. But Milton was not fond of cheap popularity. He ultimatly rejected this topic because of the unreality of the legends of King Arthur and his republican viws -- that King should not be glorified. Being a puritan he desired to glorify religion and to cultivate the seads of morality and public civility, He writes............

"To allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affection in right turn; to celebrate in glorious

and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's almightiness and what he suffers to be wrought both high providnce in his church; to sing victorious agonies of martyres and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of christ; to deplore the general relapses of Kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship. Lastly what soever in religion is holy and sublime, invirtue, amiable or grave whatsoever hath passion or admiration in all the changes of that which is called fortune from without or willy suttleties and refluxes of man's thought from within all these things with a solid and treat able smoothness to point out and describe".[5]

One can see in these lines the sincerity and conviction with which Milton talks of the poet's mission and responsibility. He holds the view that the poet is divinly bestowed with rich gift so that he may fulfil his behest and popularise his deeds among half believers, secptics and atheists.

In the sixteenth century in England poetry was defended in ordr to give the answers to puritans charges of immorality. These defences were made to the affirmation of the moral valu of poetry.

"For Milton, poetry unlike the smectymnuans,

unlike the people of England, unlike himself, needed no opology and no defence. But his conception of poetry is very like that of its defenders. He accepted as partial statement of the end of poetry the Renaissance version of the Horation statement that the aim of the poets is either to profit or to delight, or to be at once pleasant and profitable, the critics of the Renaissance, or many of them, chose to minimize half of this statement that poetry must please in order to stress the other half that poetry must be morally profitable. They chose also to ignore the reason Horace gives for his judgement a few lins later, that old men reject work which are not instructive and young men those which are not lively, whereas the poet who is at once delightful and instructive pleases all, makes a fortune for the booksellers, and establishes his own fame.[6]

Further more the author says ---

> "For milton, too, following the same classical and Italian Critics and having read Sidney also, the chief function of poetry is to instruct. We should know this, of course, from his choice of themes for his four narrative poems if from no

other evidence. The poems speak for themselves in the matter, but there is also a fully developed theory of poetry behind Milton's practice".[7]

The attack on literature of the Elizabethan Puritans was aimed of course, at literature at its worst-at its moral worst. Sidney and other critics who came to its defence ignored the worst and defended poetry at its best. Milton differs from them in not ignoring the existence of bad, of vicious poetry, and does not choose to defend poetry generally.

He discribes it at its best however - and his discription is very like the traditional "defence". The dual function of poetry is to teach and to delight. The danger inherent in the writings of "Libidinous and ignorant potasters" lies in their ability to teach ill. From them who "lap up vitious principles in sweet pils to be swallowed down, and make the last of virtuous documents harsh and sowr. The "Youth and gentry" are liable to suck in in daily corruption and bane. The true poets business, on the contrary is to teach the good. His first function is to instruct or edify. This implication is clear in the statement that the purpose of paradise lost is to "assert Eternal Providence, and Justify the ways of God to men.[8]

Milton has beautifully indicated the worth whileness of his theme in the 26 lines of Paradise Lost" as an true embodiment of his concept of poetry. He invokes the Divine.......to help him complete his assignment.

"Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song
That with no middle flight intents to soar
Above the Anonian mount, while its pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme"[9].

No doubt the theme of Paradise lost is purely religious and moral as he says.....

I may assert Eternal Providence
Any justify the ways of God to men.[10]

Milton has spoken more than once about the novelty of the theme that he chose in Paradise Lost. In Book IX, the poet John Milton dwells on the moral theme - crime and punishment, sin and suffering:

"That brought into this world a world of woe
Sin and her shadow death, and misery,
Death's harbinger."[11]

Moreover, Milton, a poet of high repute regards the authenticity of the Bible and the sublimity of his them. The heavenly muse which strongly inspires Milton is closly related to the Holy spirit which assists him in fulfilling and completing his notable work:

"Who deigns

Her mighty visitatious unimplord

And dictates to me slumbering or inspire

Easy my unpremediated verse.[12]

The story of the Fall of Man of Paradise Lost is for superior to the themes of other epic poets. Paradise Lost stands supreme by itself and its endless struggle between good and evil shows its greatmess. It is not based on any fleeting event like the capture of a town or fortress.

Bowra writes in this connection:

"Paradise Lost sets forth the noblest virtues and the darkest sins. On one side is the son on the other satan. By displaying these extremes of conduct Milton may seriously claim that his persons are, by his standards, more heroic than Achilles or Aeneas. For him the question of right and wrong was more important than any other question; he recognised almost no kind of good except the good in conduct other poets had valued

other more worldly goods such as power and success; though they had related these to some sort of divine scheme and justified them morally, their concept of the good was wider and much less strictly ethical than Milton's for heroism is goodness and he sets out to show what he means by this, its this.....

> Which justly gives Heroic name
> To persons or to poems (IX-40-41)
> and which guides Milton in the construction of his epic"[13].

Thus Milton is not content merely to affirm that it is the business of poetry to teach he is concerned also with the question of what it teaches and how, what it teaches is the whole of morality.[14]

Other Renaissanc critic befor Milton like Minturno, Scaliger, Rainolds, Sidney and Ben Johnson have the view that poetry must delight in order that its teaching be effective: As above quoted from the Reason of charch government.

C.M. Bowra has observed that Milton who owes so much to his predecessors, is at pains to explain that his subject is better than any of theirs. In the first place he claims that it is true, of this he seems to have had no doubt. Despite his refusal to submit to any church and his difficulty in finding any

satisfactory creed, he clung devotedly to the bible as the word of God, and since his subject was largely based on it, he blieved that his position was unassailable. He even goes further than this and claims divine inspiration. When he calls on urania to inspire him, he explains that she is no classical invention but a divine power:

> Thou with Eternal wisdom didst converse,
> Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
> In presnce of the Almighty father pleased
> With thy celestial song.(VII,9,12).

This power not only helps him to compose but actually gives him his words: It is she:

> Who deigns
> Her nightly visitation unimplored
> And dictates to me slumbring orinspire
> Easy my unpremeditated verse. (IX-21-3)

Milton's heavenly Muse is a divine voice, close to the Holy spirit, whom in his opening lines he invokes immediately after her and calls to illumine and support him; she is the voice of God that spoke to Moses from oreb and Sinai, coming from such a source Milton's poem demands special respect".[15]

It is fact that to get knowledge and pleasure is

not the aim of potry, if we acknowledge it to the aim of poetry, it deminises its value. As Dickhoff says.

"The end of poetry, then is not only knowledge and pleasure but action as well. It not only shows the way "But givethso sweete a prospect into the way, an will intice any man to enter into it." The aim of poetry is not as we have thus for described it, two fold but three fold. The critics of the Renaissance, Sidney and Milton with them, have gone beyond Horace's statement that poats aim either to teach or to please, or, or to do both, and have given to poets the aim set down for oraters by Cicero: to teach, to please and to move. They are to persuade as well as to instruct.[16]

We find the poetry of Milton blending rhetorical and poetic principles and the science of persuasion is not poetics but rhetoric, persuasion, the chief end of oratory is also part of the function of potry and Milton accepted, the poet and the orator share the desire to move men to virtuous.

> "For Aristotle, and hence for the classical scholars of the Renaissance, and for Milton, rhetoric is a counterpart of dialictic. What in dialictic is inductive reasoning finds its rhetorical counterpart in the example, the

single instance illustrative of a principle, from which a principle may be induced. What in dialictic is deductive reasoning, syllogistic inform, in rhetoric becomes the enthy meme.

But in addition to these two formes of proof, rhetoric-drawing upon all the means available-makes use of two means of persuasion that are not directed toward the intellect and hence are not proof in the strict sence of the word.[17] According to Aristotle

"Of the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself.[18]

According to the poet, there is a intimate relationship between poem and oration. And he used all these means of persuasion in paradise lost. By classification we find three kinds of oration recognised by classical rhetoric, the deliberative, the epideictic and the forensic. The poet may not be only a simple emitator but should be a sort of deliberative orator as well.

"That is hymning "the throne and equipage of God's Almightiness or in singing the "Victorian agonies

of Martyrs and Saints" poetry seems nearer akin to epideictic oratory; that in deploring the general relapses of kingdom and states from justice and Gods true worship" or in justifying to men God's ways, it seems nearer to forensic oratory, does not really disturb this conclusion, for the end assigned to these poems, as to all others, is also to make the paths of honesty and the good life appear easy and pleasant in order to entice men into them."[19]

In the apology for smectymnuus, the true poet is described in terms of the true poem, which is a composition, and pattern of the best honourable things".[20]

Milton has the same notion as most of the Renaissance critics have. Donald clark was vividly described in his study of "Rhetoric and poetry in the Renaissance".

He cited a number of Italian Renaissance cririics and concludes his discussion of "Rhetorical Elements in Italian Renaissance conceptions of the purposed of poetry" by citing the notion of minturno and scaliger that both a poem and speech endeavoured to teach, to please and to move. Both looked toward persuation on an object. The speech used the enthymeme and the example on proofs while the poem used the example to a greater

and the enthymeme to lesser degree".

Clark writes in his chapter as follows:

Thus by the end of the sixteenth century, the Italian critics had formulated a logical and self-consistent theory of the purpose of poetry. Inheritors of the allegorical theory of the middle ages, which they in part discarded, and discovers of classical rhetoric which they carried over bodily into their theories of poetry. They passed on to france, Germany and England their rhetorical theories. The purpose of poetry, an well as of rhetoric was to them persuasion -- to teach, to please, to move. The instrument of poetry was the rhetorical example.[21]

As matter of fact Milton has manifold aim--so it has created the complexity is his epic paradise lost which demands the attention of the readers. Being spritual and philosophical poet his main task was to invent or adopt a story that would represent the whole world and that may enterprete that aspect of it with which he was concerned and as a poet of morality he had to present a narrative that would persuade his reader to adopt a scheme of life. We find transcendental material in Paradise Lost is for great assistance to him in the Manipulation of his story. In response to Adam's request for news of what has passed in Heaven,

Raphael prefaces his story with the following reservation:-

> High matter thou injoinst me, O Prime of men,
> Sad task and hard, for how shall I relate
> To human sense th' invisible exploits
> Of warring spirits; how without remorse
> The ruine of so many glorious once
> And perfect while they stood: how last unfould
> The secrets of another world, perhaps
> Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good
> This is dispence, and what surmounts the reach
> Of human sence, I shall delineate so,
> By liking spiritual to corporal forms
> As may express them best, though what if Earth.
> Be out the shaddow of Heaven, and things therein
> Each to other like, more than on earth
> is thought? (V,563-576)

This passage is no doubt, a direction to Adam designed to guide him in the interpretation of Rapheal's story. Hanford says about the passage that it contains.

"The philosophic assumption which under lies the narrative and indeed Milton's whole conception of his peom.........spiritual facts can only so be represented to human sense. But there is also perhaps a real

analogy between earth and Heaven, the former being according to the platonic doctrine of ideas an imperfect, replica of the latter, and this analogy justifies the phrasing of devine events in material terms.[22]

There is an illuminating parallel in the Christian Doctrine, on the interpretation of Scripture:

"Out safest way is to form is our mind such a conception of God, as shall correspond with his own delineation and representation of himself with sacred writings. For granting that both in the literal and figurative discription of God, he is exhibited not as he really is, but in such manner as may be within the scope of our comprehension, yet we ought to entertain such a conception of him as he in condescending to accomodate himself to our capacities, has shown that he desire we should conceive. For it is on this very account that he has loward himself to our level, lest in our flights above the reach of human understanding, and beyond the written word of scripture, we should be tempted to indulge in vague cogitation and subtleties.[23]

Dichoff says-

"We have seen in our brief survey of Milton's theory of poetry that Milton accepts the ethical

principal that the end of knowledge is virtuous action. Whether we challenge the theological position or not, we can learn what Milton's conception of virtuous actions is what the problem and what the obligation of the human individual is, what the reward for perseverence and what the penalty for failure what the means and that the dangers - all these we may learn and formulate, for all these Milton has undertaken, "With a solid and treatable smootheness to paint out and describe." The twentieth-century reader who rejects the detail of the theology may or may not reject the ethic.............

An exposition of a poem designedly theological can hardly avoid treading theological problems. If the poem is concerned with the relationship btween God and man, the expostion must concern itself what that relationship. Ours will do so with an informality that reflects both the writers incapacity to deal formally with theological problems and his conviction that paradise Lost" a "feigned example" a fiction, however, historical and however philosophical, and that its meaning may therefore be understood and its bearing on conduct determined without special concern for theological controversies. Our concern will be to determine what according to Milton should be the

guiding principales of an individual human life. If the end of Paradise Lost is virtuous action, what guides to such action does it offer? In the analysis of paradise lost as an argument, the answer to this question will be our chief concern.[24]

In respect of paradise lost Grierson writes:-

"We can contemplate Paradise Lost'll without some disposition to Challenge the theological positions, its central justification of God's ways to men.[25]

"Comus is a famous masque, of Milton which is not for merely amusement. It is really a poem in praise of virtue, goodness and temperate living. It gives us moral teaching. As Prof. Dowden says.

"From the first scene to the last the drama is a representation of the trials, difficulties and dangers to which moral purity is exposed in this world and of the victory of the better principal in the soul caused by strenuous human endeavour aided by the grace of God.[26]

Dr.W.J. long is so much impressed by the moral touches of "comus" that he says "comus has the georgeous scenic affects, the music and dancing of the Masques; but its oral purpose and its ideal teaching are unmistakeable. The triumph of virtue, would be a

better name for the perfect little masque for its theme is that virtue and innocence can walk through any peril of the world without permanent harm.

Milton by showing the victory of the lady over comes shows that virtue can never be feeble in the world and chastity will ever hold its sway over immoral corruption and vices. Milton exalts virtue all through the poem and the significant quotations wherein he puts his belief are-

> "Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt,
> Surpirsed by unujust force, but not enthralled."

These words are spoken by the Elder Brother.

> "Virtue could see to do what virtue would
> By her own radiant light, though sun and Moon
> Were in the flat sea sunk".[29]

Milton shows that in the great conflict between good and evil. It is good that will ultimatly triumph. Somehow other good is the final goal of ill. Evil and corruption can ever win the day. They must be thrown out of good life. Arguments against the final defeat of evil are sit forth by the Elder Brother in these words.

> "But evil on itself shall back recoil,
> And mix no more with goodness, when at last,
> Gathered like scum, and settled to itself,

It shall be internal restless chage.

Self-fed self-consumed, if this fail,

The pillared firmanent is rottenness.

And earth's base built on stubble.[30]

The lady says to comus that good will always within end.

"None

But such as are good men can give good things,

And that which is not delicious

To a well-governed and wise appetite."[31]

From all these quotation it is very clear that comus is a masque in praise of the virtuous life. Virtue can never be feeble, and this is really the contral theme of the masque. Prof. Dowden rightly says "His poetical works, and comus among them, are various rendring of one dominant idea-that th struggle for mastery between good and evil the prime fact of life and that a final victory of the righteous cause is assured by the existence of a divine order of the univrse, which
Milton knew by the name of providence."

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9. P.L.Book I "Poetical Works of John Milton" edited by David Masson Macmillan London 1911 page - 40.

10. Ibid, Page No.44.

11. P.L.Book IX Ibid page 194.

12. Ibid

13. C.M.Bowra "Forms virgil to Milton" Macmillan London 1943 page 103.

14. "Milton's Paradise Lost" by John Dichoff C.U.P. : London 1946 Chap.I

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34. Milton's Paradise Lost by John Dichoff C.U.P. London 1946 Chapter I Page 11.

25. Ibid.

26. Dowdn, Edward "Puritan and Anglican N.Y.1901 page 133.

27. Ibid.

28. Milton "Comus" Elder Brother says from "Poetical works of John Milton" edited by David Masson Macmillan London 1911 page 527.

29. Ibid page 522.

30. Ibid page 527.

31. Ibid "Lady ways to Comus" Ibid, page 530.

MILTON'S REPUTATION AND INFLUENCE DURING THE COURSE OF CENTURIES

MILTON'S REPUTATION AND ENFLUENCE

John Milton says about himself.

"I was born in London of an honest family. My father destined me from a child to the pursuits of the literature and my appetite for knowledge was so voracious, that from 12 years of my age, I hardly ever left my studies or went to bed before migh night.[1]

He studied Latin Greek and Hebrew (in addition to being tutored in Hebrew at home by Thomas young, a presbyterian divine) and got a thorough grounding in classical rhetorics, which he was taught to apply to the analysis of Latin and Greek prose and verse.[2]

Thus his curiosity for knowledge made him a classic poet of English Literature.

He is one of the literary giants of English Literature and no doubt he has become "God gifted organ voice of England[3] of all the poets of the seventeenth century. He was the very greatest, the blind bard of epic genius. he is often called the "Mighty Mouthed Inventor"[4] and harmonised the conflicting tradition of renaissance and reformation.

In Literature Milton occupies a prominent place. He came immediately after the

Elizabethan epock when Elizabethan method were crambling into chaos, Milton's poetic style was as stately as his character. He temper was firm enough together into one system the wavering tendencies of poetry, and to given them sureness, accuracy and variety. The next generation, lacking the inspiration of the Elizabethan, found in him the necessary stimulus to order and accuracy and form him, to a great extent, sprang the new classicism that was to be the rule for more than a centruy.

In the words of Prof. Saintsbury:

"It is sufficient to say that Milton is undoubtedly on of the few great poets in the history of the world, and that if he falls short of Homer, Dante and Shakespeare, it is chiefly because he expresses less of that humanity both universal and essential which they and especially the last, put into verse, narrowness in his fault. But the intense individuality, which often accompanies narrowness in his great virtue which no poet, which no writer either in verse or prose has ever had in greter measure than he, and which hardly any has been able to express with more varied and exquisite harmoney.[5]

For Milton it has been generally supposed that he remained unknown and unpopular during his

life time, even his earlier poems which got much popularity at the time when they were poured out, were ignored during the Restoration age. As James Thorpe remarks in these words "Our interest in Milton as a controversialist, however, is secondary to our interest in him as a Poet. Here again he lacked the prominence that later readers have felt he ought to have had. his minor poems were generally unknown during his life time. As a representative example of various possible tests, there is aparently no contemporary printed reference to 'L' Allegro or to 'Lycidas'. The publication of Paradise Lost in 1667 and of Paradise Regained and Sanson Agomistes (in 1671) created no sensation. In short, Milton lived and died as relativey obscure poet.[6]

But it is far from truth, and it is merely a delusion that his greatness was little recognised in his life time. It is fact that he was not desirous of earning fame. He did not like to make any attempt to be published much in order to get cheep popularity. He hated such type of popularity. He was, however, fortunate in getting recognition of his literary labours without making any attempt.

In the words of Baily "The truth is the exact reverse. He had for chance of hearing his own praise?

if he cared for that, than most of the great English poets than Keats and Shelly, for instance, than wordsworth, at least till he was old, in all probability than Shakespeare himself, which of them heard the most popular poet of their day say of them anything at all Dryden's famous and generous "This man cuts all out and the ancients too?" It was because of his popularity that in one and half year from the day of publication over thirteen hundred copies had been sold[7]. Prof. Hanford also poins out "some 400 copies of Paradise Lost were in circulation by 1680, enough to supply that, fir audience though few which Milton wanted.[8]

This shows that Milton's poetic out put was studied and admired not only by the selected few, like Andrew Marvell, but also by the Public at large. In the year of Milton's death, Dryden expressed his opinion, that the Paradise Lost, was one of the greatest most noble and most sublime poems which either his age or nation has produced.[9]

"The poem had considerable success. Published in 1667, it sold out its first edition of 1300 copies by 1674, when it went into a second in the year of Milton's death.

Them it gathered momentum. In 1678 came a third

and in the year of the Revolution which turned out James II came a fourth, with a Roll-call of distinguished names as subscribers. Among them were the poet Laureate, Dryden a Catholic, be it noted; eminent Anglicans like Dean Alabich and Dean Atterburry all more tolerant than Milton the Poet Wallaers the dramatist Sir Rober Howard; pers like Lord Dorset and the great lawyers, Somers, to become a peer; Milton's old Tory antagonist, Sir Roger 'L' Estrange. Four years later there followed a fifth edition, afine folio, three years later a sixth, and then there poured from the press no less than nine more edition before the great scholar Bentley's extra-ordinary editions imblessed by Portrains engraved by virtue and emendations as if the text were Virgil or Homer, in 1732. Meanwhile translations wwere appearing abroad.[10]

He further says:

"The fact was that Paradise Lost soon began to be appreciated for the wonderful work it's. A historian observes than the Revolution of 1688 which effectively inaugurated a Parliament and Monarchy, gave a strary impulse to Milton's renown. He entered whig temples of fame as a defender of liberty, with busts of his venerated as such. To the Dissenters, immensely strengthened by the glorious Revolution, he became

patriarch and prophet, Paradise Lost along with the Pilgrim's Progress promoted to the status of secondary Bible. In the end Milton had fortune on his side.

Persons of taste appreciated the greatness of the work from the first, led by Dryden. He based an opera on Milton's book. "The state of Innoance, or the fall of Man" acknowledged that this poem has received its entire foundation, part of the design, and many of the ornaments, from him. He apologised for the inadequacy of his own work. The original being undoubtedly one the greatest, most noble and most sublime poems which either this age or nation has produced. How generous a tribute this was, and every word of it sings sincere.' According to Aubrey, Dryden, who very much admired him (Milton) went to him to have leave to put his Paradise Lost into a Drama in rhythm. Mr. Milton received him civilly and told him he would give him leave to tag his verses (Tage were points, sometimes of metal or silver, which decorated the ends of laces or ribbons or Press)"[11]

"MILTON IN THE 17th CENTRUY"

Milton's reputation grew enormously day by day soon after his death now he became a clossal image of English poetry and no doubt he became a beacon for other poets. His magnum upus 'Paradise Lost' came to be

reognised as a great poem. In the last quarter of the 17th Centry, a definite Miltonaic tradition had come to be recognised. The succeeding century was marked by a Universal recognition and sublime quality of his poetry in particular was specially admired. As James Thorpe remarks "During the last quarter of the seventeenth century, however, his poetry rapidly achieved considerable fame. Attention was centred on Paradise Lost. The fact that a Miltonic tradition was established in the last quarter of the 17th century has sometimes been obscured by the nation that Addison's spectator papers on Paradise Lost in 1712 "introduced" Milton. The fact is that for more than twenty five years before that time Milton has been receiving very high praise in critical asides of leading writers of the time. Dryden, Roscommon, Buckingham Burnet, Dennis and gildon are representative of levels of opinion which though varied, generally ranked Milton as at least the qual o any other English Poet. It is true that his criticism usually lacked definitions and viewed Milton somewhat narrowly as the chief representative of the English heroic tradition. But it is also true that this criticism unequivocally identified Milton as a supremely great poet. In 1678 Thomas Rymer was representative of only a minority of the critics in his manner of referring to the Paradise

Lost of Milton's which some are pleased to call a poem".[12]

The poetical tributes of the age expresses the sweet feeling of admination which Milton's poetry elicited. Andrew Marvell's beautiful verses prefixed to the 1674 edition of Paradise Lost is characterised of the time.

> That Majesty which through thy work doth Reign
> Draws the Devout, deterring the Profane
> And things divine thou treatst of in such state
> As them Preserves, and thee, envoilate
> At once delight and horror on us seize,
> Though sing'st with so much gravity and ease;
> with plume so strong, so equal and so soft.[13]

He concludes by taking up Milton's point about rhyme :

> "I too, trnaported by the mode, offend
> And while I meant to praise thee, must commend;
> Thy verse, created like thy theme sublime
> In numbis weight, and measure, nmeeds not rhyme."[14]

"Paradise Lost has to speak to those who find the basic tenets of Christinaty intellectually untenable and its moral teaching repugnant, and also to those who feel that the theological concerns of the seventeenth century are grotesquely remote

from the religious thought and experience of today and that Milto's stress and emphasis is unacceptable. That Milton showed extraordinary temerity in taking for his subject the vast design of the Christian myth as it had developed through seventeenth centuries was recognised fromthe beginning, and Marvell's verses, added in the second edition of Paradise Lost, may be regarded as addressed to the Christian reader aghast at the poet's boldness in attempting cost this hollowed story into the form of classical epic but Marvell confesses that his doubts, on reading the argument the poet:

> Would ruine (for I saw his strong)
> The sacred thruths to fable and old song,
> Were quiated as he read the poem itself by a 'Majesty
> Reigning through the work which
> Draws the Devout deterring the profane.

He praises Milton's gravity (Gravitas or Weight) and his ease (facilities fluency and grace) that inspire in us "delight and horror, the plume so strong, so equal and so soft on which he soars" above human flight and declares that his verses is like his 'Theme Sublime'.[15]

It does not appear that Marvell, whose

sensibility has proved so congenial to twentieth century raders, was in any way offended by Paradise Lost, and Dryden's complaint against Milton's subject was not as the grounds of its unsuitability for extended narrative treatment in the form of classical epic, but on grounds of epic precendent. The subject of an epic had always been an enterprise successfully performed by the Hero, and Milton had chosen a subject in which the Devil was successful and therefore, must be regarded as playing the traditions hero's role, the giant has foiled the knight and driven him out of his strong hold, to wander through the world with his lady errant.[16]

In many ways Milton stands apart from concers that we think of a characteristic of the seventeenth century. The great points at issue between the different confessions, turning on the doctrine of the Atonement, the relation of faith and works, Church Order, and the nature of the sacraments, are marginal to the true subject of Paradise Lost. And if we think of 17th century religious writing we must be struck by how little some of the gret 17th century topics are reflected in Milton's poetry. The sense of sin, the need for salvation, the shudder at death, the fear of judgement the hope of resurrection-- these are not

themes that receive grand expression in Paradise Lost. Neither in his poetry nor in his prose do we even hear in Milton's voice that thrilling note of personal anguish that gives the religios poems and the sermons of Donee the power to speak to those who may not share his faith but recognize the reality of his predicament. Milton shares with his age certain conceptions that are today quite unacceptable: an equation of sin with guilt, and outmoded psychology that makes him unable to conceive of temptation and sin in any but intellectual terms and a narrowly legalistic theory of the Atonement, it is not in its presentation of these common place of 17th century theology and thought that the greatness of Paradise Lost lies, but in the fervour and the force with which Milton expressed certain personal convictions.[17]

Milton was a religious poet, and was a Christian humanist. So he left indilible impression cn the mind of Marvell. He, no dount became the lover of Milton's poetry. According to David Daiche "Marvel, like Milton, was a Christian Humanist, and though he is generally regarded as a Puritan poet, his own career illustrates perfectly the dilemma of a sensitive and serious temperament caught up in a civil conflict whiich he deplored, unlike Milton,

Marvell could never commit himself wholeheartedly to the commenwealth cause, he accepted it largely because:

> This Madness to resist or blame
> The force of angry Heaven's flame

and he was friendly with many of the Parliamentary leaders. In 1657 he was appointed Assistant to Milton in the Latin secretaryship. But looking back after ward, he sad that "upon considering all, I think the cause was too good to have been fought for. Men ought to have trusted God--they ought to have trusted the king with the whole matter".[18] John Dennis says:

> The next poet of whom we shall treat is Milton, on of the greatest and most daring genius that has appeared in the world.[19]

Dryden sings the praise of Milton in these word:

> Three poets in three distant ages born,
> Greece, Italy and England did adorn
> The first in liftiness of thought surpassed;
> The next in majestry: in thought the last,
> The force of nature could no farther go
> To make a third, she joined the former two.[20]

Though Dryden's admiration for Milton as poet was unbounded, his criticism is not penetrating in analysing the elements that constitute his greatness.

One of his remarks, however, is interesting. "This man cuts us all out and the ancients too". Milton's influence on Dryden is unmistakable. Dryden expressed his admiration for Milton's style and though he himself was the inventor of a style, entirely different from that of Milton. His enfluence on him has been unmistakable. Dryden's own style on verrall pointed out, gained in strength from his reading of Paradise Lost; and when he came to write the fables he too felt the need of phrasing more remote from that of everyday speech. Other critics have also pointed out that the enfluence of Miltonic speeches in Paradise Lost; Book II is evident on the poetical speeches of Absolem and Achitophel, although blank verse and heroic couplet are poles apart as medium of poetic expression. The very fact that Dryden tried to model his absolomand Achitophel on the epic petter, is indicative of Milton's enfluence on him. James Thorpe remarks:

"Most of the early opinion on Milton the man seem to have been motivated by political considerations. In the seventeenth century, for instance, he was frequently reviled by the Royalists who did not readily forget his past in the rebellion. William Winstanly observed in 1687 that "John Milton was one whose natural parts might deservedly give

him a place amongst the principal of our English poets, having written two heroic poems and a tragedy.[21]

MILTON IN THE 18th CENTURY :

Hanford says "The record of Milton's ame and influence in the eighteenth century is on itegral part of the laiterary and intellectual history of the age. In no other time has he had so many readers or been the occassion of so much discussion. The frequency of editions increases by leaps and bounds and the chorus of praise from poets and critics gains continuously in volume. The special reasons for this interest are various.On the one hand,there was the fact that Milton was an imitator, however liberal, of the admired ancients. The classical form of Paradise lost invited compassion with Homer and Virgil, and such comparisons were continually made. Further more, milton's puritanism commended itself to an age which had reacted against the spirit of license in Restoration tile nature; and his general didacticism, far from being felt as defect, was in entire accord with domenat literary practice. But his appeal was felt, also, and in the end, primarily, on the ground of the sublimity and fervour of his poetic imagination,..it was here that he fell in with the under-lying current

of romanticism which was unsatisfied by thc rationalizing poetry of the school of Pope: and as this tendency asserted itself more powerfully. Milton became more and more acclaimed as a Champion of the inwardness and freedom of true poetry. Finally, Milton's style and versification were fascinating by their very contract with prevailing literary mode. He was quarry of poetical pharase for everybody, even for Pope, and and a direct model for the vast school of blank versifiers who maintained, what might be called, the other poetical tradition of the eighteenth century is an extra ordinary varied and complex phenomenon."[22]

The 18th century entered a new phase of Milton criticism. In the early part of the century Addison published six general essays on Paradise Lost. Addison criticised the English epic according to the ancient rule and compared it on equal terms with the works of Homer and Virgil. Undoubtedly it is true that his praise enhanced the reputation of Milton's in all quarters. Papers published in he spectator in 1712, bcame at once the standard piece of Milton criticism. The one quality that was universally admired in 18th century was described as sublimity, the capacity of his poetry to enlarge the imagination of the reader. As James Thorpe points out:

"Addison's study was the most prominent of several that served to crystallize and elaborate a prevalent opinion of the early eighteenth century by providing the basis of a detailed examination. the tremendous enfluence of Addison" critique (which consisted of six general essays or Paradise lost and one essay on each of the twelve books) in inadequately illstrated even by the fact that it appeared in English at least thirty times within the century. Milton's reputation was progrressively extended during the eighteenth century, but a Miltonic tradition had been established by about 1730 that persisted in a general way through out the remainder of the century. This tradition consisted of a compound of three complex, inter-dependent and yet distinguished conceptions that of the man that of the philosopher and athat of the artist.[23]

William Winstanley observed in 1687 that "John Milton was one whose natural parts might deservedly give him a place amongst the prinicipal of our English poets, having written two Heroic poems and a tragedy.[24]

The greatest emphasis of eighteenth century critics of Milton was on his philosophy or (more accurately) on his religious teaching. Criticism

centered on Paradise Lost, which was venerated as a principal support of the orthodox creed. The epithet "sacred" and divine were scattered with a lavish hand. The heterodox elements were not noticed and the poem appealed equally to Anglicans, Dissenters, Romans, Catholics and Deists. In 1979 it was maintained that Paradise Lost had contributed more to support the orthodox creed than all the books of divinity that were ever written.[25]

One of the most distinguished citizen of America wrote "As to the Paradise Lost --- I have never read it as a whole, and I doubt whether I have known any other person who has even done so". These words carry weight for their author was a gentle man of fine culture and of unusally wide acquaintance among cultivated persons both in academic and in diplomatic circles. Nor is his testimonry unique. A well known orater won the smiling approval of a large audience some twenty five years since when he referred to Milton's epic as "a poem that every one talks about and no one reads". Conditions may be better in Great Britain and her colonies yet within the last decade an English author has likened Milton to "the colossal image of same God in a remote and rarely visited shrine".[26]

A few persons have the opinion that 'Milton' has never been a popular poet as shakespear is popular, never perhpas even as Scott is popular or as Byron was in his day and generation.[27] Saintsburry's dictum is that although the eighteenth century did not thoroughly understand them, it accepted even Shakespear and Milton --- it regarded Dryden very much as we should regard Shakespear and Milton rolled into one".[28]

Austin Dobson, whose familarity with with the period is unrivalled says in speaking of Mrs. Delany (1700-1788) "during the earlier half of her life time, Pope reigned paramount in poetry and Milton was practically forgotten during the later half, people were beginning to forget Pope, and to remember Milton".[29]

No doubt, it is a matter of surprise "that between 1705 and 1800 Paradise Lost was published over a hundred times. The wonder grows when we look at the Faerie Queen, which, we are accustomed to think, had approximately the same number of readers as the epic, if so, they must have borrowed most of their copies, for Spenser's poem appeared only seven times, in the same period.[30]

Macbeth, the famous play of Shakespear was published by itself only thirteen times, where as comus

in its original form saw three printings, and as adopted for the stage over thirty. Further more, Paradise Lost had the unique honour of being the first poem to be sold by subscription, the first English poem to appear in a critical edition, the first to have a variorum edition, and the first to be made the subject of a detailed critical study.[31]

Is it any wonder that when Jacob Tonsen, a leading printer of the day was asked "what poem he ever got the most by" he immdiately named Paradise Lost.[32]

Samson Agonistes, besides being translated into Greek, was four times adopted for the stage or for music, and that the version made for Handel's cratorio was published at least nine times before 1800.

Francis Blackburne's Memoirs of Thomas Hllis" and Joseph Warton's Essay on Pope are largely devoted to the "mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies".[33]

Leonard Welsted writes "I have a fondness" for Waller, but "I pay adoration" to Milton[34].
Warburton, who himself thought the English epic superior to those of Greece and Rome, must have been sneering at more extreme views when he spoke of "all the silly adorns of Milton, who deserve

to be laughed at.[35]

This recalls the "Gentleman of Oxford" who feared to criticise one whose popularity was so "immeasurably great, and his Reverence little less than divine".[36]

The "divine Milton" is the man Hollis's favourite phrase for the man whom he also called my hero and the guide of my path[37].

"Idolators" is the expression used by George Hardings, who adds "few, if any, can out-idolize me".[38]

Among these "idolators" was Jonathan Richardson the Paiter, who devoted the "beloved Retired Hours" of many years to the loving study and service of "one to whom" he declared, "I am infinitly obliged". "I even I" Richardson writes in his pleasant, garrulous way "While a youth -- -- happening to find the first quarto (of what he else where terms "the best Poem in the world") -- was dazzled with it, and from that Hour all the rest (Shakespear expected) faded in my Estimation, or vanished. "This recalls the experience of another idolator, Cowper, who "at so ripe on age As twice seven years" "danced for joy" over his discovery of Paradise ost, a work which he too thought the finest poem in the world, and the author of which he referred

to as "this greatest of men your idol and mine.[39]

It is to be encounter as early as 1704, when the epic was charactorized by a leading critic as "the greatest poem that ever was written by man[40] and as late as 1796, when it was described as "the noblest poem, perhpas, that ever the wit of man produced.[41]

Even Dr. Johnson who disliked Milton's character, opposed blank verse, and ridiculed Lycidas and the Sonnets, commended the epic as "a poem which considered with respect to design, may claim the first place, and with respect to performance the seocnd, among the productions of the human mind".[42]

Philip never declared the "genius" of Milton. He calls Paradise Lost "the greatest work of human genius".[43]

Milton is invoked as the 'Supreme of verse"[44]

He has been characterised as "an Author of the excellence of genius and learning that name of any Age or Nation I think, has excelled him" or as "perhaps the greatest genius that ever appeared among them"[45].

Burke called Penseroso "the finest poem in the English language".[46] Hugh Blair thought "of all the English poems in the Descriptive style, the richest and most remarkable.[47]

"The Allegro and Penserose are Equisite Picture"[48]

Nathan Drake went even further 'L' Allegro and Penseroso are the most equisite and accurately descriptive poem in his own, or any other language, and will probably for ever remain unrivalled.[49]

John Aikin said much the same, ranking the octosyllabics as 'perhaps the most captivating piece of the descriptive kind that all poetry affords'.[50]

Christopher Smart says "Neither is there to be found two movie finished pieces of Lyric poetry in our language, 'L' Allegro and II pensesors of Miltn excepted, which are the finest in any'.[51]

George hardin's opinion is tht "the best of Milton's Sonnets are equal to any thing he has written".[52]

Before 1720 comus was called "the best masque ever written in the praise of which no words can be too many" and in 1756 same who held it "one of the most poetical and moving elegies that ever was wrote".[53]

All the critics have the unanimous opinion regarding Paradise Lost. Each and every one thought his epic, the greatest poem in the world. Some modestly claimed for it only a pre-eminence among English works. Gilbert Burnet, for example qualified his statements that Paradise Lost "was esteemed the beuatifulest and perfectest poem that ever was written at least in our

language.[54]

So, allso does the Lay-Monastery, when it speaks casually of "our great Milton, whose poem, which is justly only acknowledged to be the most admirable production of British Genius.[55]

The Edinburgh Review was nearer the truth when it declared in 1808 "that Pope is not of the Class of Milton"[56] though Pope was regarded as one of the greatest poet of that age.

John Duncombe says, Matchless Milton is formost in the list of fame.[57]

Dryden, one of the greatest critics of English literature thinks of Paradise Lost "One of the greatest, most noble and most sublime poems which either this age or nation has produced.[58]

His friend Nathaniel Lee boldly adopted the following lines from the same poem within thirteen years of it publication:

> They, have blown us up with wild fire in the air
> Cops, hats and Cardinals coats,and cowls and Hoods,
> Are tost about-- the sport the sport of winds,
> Indulgences, Dispenses, Pardons, Bulls, see Yonder

Priest, they fly-- they are whirled aloft, they fly,

They fly over the backside, O the world,

Into a Limbe large, and broad, since called the Paradise of Fools.[59]

Defoe had composed three poems in a verse roughly modelled upon that of Paradise Lost and had asked "who can read Virgil, Horace, oviel, Milton, Waller or Rochester without touching the strings of his soul, and finding a unison of the most charming influence there.[60]

Prior took the unrymed measure very seriously; he imitated it four times, and in his translation of two lofty hymns of callimachus with some success, while in the preface to his Solomon 1718 he attacked rhyme and declared Paradise Lost to be "One of the sublimest pieces of invention that was ever yet produces.[61]

"Congreve mentions an "immortal song" which is "As Spenser Sweet, as Milton strong. lady Mary Montagem, with whom Pope flirted and quarrelled, attacked the "thraldom of monastic rhymes and praised" the beauties of each living page" of Milton's poem. Shaftesburry's praise of Paradise Lost is worth quoting "Our most approved heroic poem" he wrote in 1710, has neither the softness of language nor the fashionable turn of wit,

but merely solid thought, strong reasoning, noble passion and a continued thred of moral doctrine, piety and virtue to recommend it."[62]

Parnell wrote two poems on the model of Allegro and is said to have been a careful student of Milton. Warburten translated "in imilation of Milton's style Latin poem of Addison's and lauded he minor poems, of the education and the Aropagitica, a famous sentence from which he appropriated for the conclusion of one of his pamphlets.[63]

Thomson's appreciation and imitation of Paradise Lost will receive extended treatment later,but it may be noted here that on a single page of his winter he praises Pope and declares Milton to be equal to Homer.[64]

Voltair's opinion tallied so closely with that of the leading Englishmen of the time that he might well have said to them in the significant words which Lyttelton gave to Boileau "The taste of your countrymen's is very much changed since the days of Charless of second, when Dryden was though a greater poet than Milton.[65]

Henry Grove, one of the contributors to the spectator thought that "for beauty, variety and grandeur of descriptions as well as true sublime

in sentiments" Milton was "greatly preferable" to Homer and he allowed Homer the Praise of a very great genius, he thought the iliad would no more bear a comparison with Paradise Lost than the Pagen scheme of Theology with the Christian".[66]

Joseph Warten gave poetical expression to the same opinion when he spoke of "thou Vales of Joy".

> Where Maro and Musaeus sit
> Listening to Milton'n loftier song,
> With sacred silent wonder smit
> While monarch of the tuneful throng
> Homer in rapture throws his trumpet down
> And to the Britan given his ameranthine crown.[67]

William massey, one of the editors of Paradise Lost declared that its author might be said to be much superior to Homer and Virgil.[60]

Richardson, accordingly had ample grounds not only for asserting that Milton excelled all ancients and moderns" but for adding "I take leave to say so upon Many Good Authorities.[69]

Johnson says:

Addison "has made Milton an universal favorite with whom readers of every class think it necessary to be pleased.[70]

As late as 1793 John Aikin declared "A relish for

the works of Milton is not only a test of sensibility to the mre exquisite beauties of poeting, but a kind of measure of the exaltation of the mind in its moral and religious sentiments.[71]

John Jortian called him "the favourite poet of this nation".[72]

William Massay remarks on 'Paradise Lost' is read with pleasure and admiration by persons of every Degree and Conditions. A critics says "Paradise Lost is in every one's hand".[73]

It wll be remembered that the swan of bichfield "lisped" -- if a swan may be permitted to lisp Allegro and Penserose "when only in her third year" and that cowper's enthusiasm dated from his boyhood. Ebenezer Elliott could in his sixteenth year repent the first, second and six books of Paradise Lost without missing a world and a twelve year old girl, careline Symmons, was so passionately attached to Milton that to have been the author of his Octosyllabies she would have decline no personal sacrifice or face or form. In order that children might appreciate the beauties of Milton, edition of his poems were prepared especially for them. The popular clergyman Dr. Dodd, recommended his "familiar Explanation of the poetical works of Milton especially to parents and those who have the care of

youth, if they are desirious that their children and Trusts should be acquainted with the greaces of British Homer."[74]

Richard Baron wrote: Milton in particular ought to be read and studied by all our young gentlemen as an oracle. He was a great and noble genius, perhaps the greatest that ever appeared among men. His works are full of wisdom, a treasure of knowledge.[75]

Three oxford Professors of poetry, Joseph Tropp, Thomas Warton and Joseph Spence were imitators of Milton.[76]

Barrow's latin verses prefixed to the second edition of Paradise Lost, which were thus translated in the Gentlemen's Magazine XXX.291

> Who read Lost Paradise, the fall
> Of wretched man what reads he less than all?
> All nature's works from whence they rose
> Their fates and ends, these lofty line disclose.[77]

Miltonic allusions were naturally to the lips even of general people in the 18th century.The word 'monody' for instance which is hardly more common today than it was before the appearance of Lycidas was much used after 1740.[78]

Lycidas was presented as a 'musical entertainment in

the memory of the Duke of York.[79] Addison says:

"Paradise Lost is not an heoic poem but a divine one and indeed a new species".[80]

In the words of Dennis more lofty, more terrible, more vehements, more astenishiny and with more impetuous and more divine Raptures[81]. Collins pictured him:

> High on some cliff, to heaven up piled,
> Of rude access, of prospect wild,
> Where tangled round the jeaous steep
> strange shades over bow the valleys deep.[82]

Gray praised "that enchantiny air of freedom and wildness" is versification[83] and another poet mentioned "splendic Acts" which "require a Milton, or a Must of Fire.[84]

It was of Milton that Issac Watts immediately thought when he invoked the "Adventurous Muse" "give me" he wrote:

> Give me the Muse whose generous force
> Impatient of the Reins
> Pursues on unattempted course,
> Breaks all the critics tron chains,
> And bears to Paradise the raptured Mind
> There Milton dwells: The mortal Song,
> Themes not presumed by mortal tongue,

New Terrors and new glaxies shine
In every page, and flying scenes Divine
Surprise the wondering sense, and draw our
souls along.[85]

Deniel Webb says:

Milton is like a flood, whose Tide,
Swelled with tempestuous Deluge, roars,
Which from some lofty Mountain's side
Restless foams, and knows no sshores.[86]

Dennis, who touched upon nearly all aspects of the work, characeried it as 'the most lofty, but most irregular poem, that has been produced by the mind of man".[87]

It may be remembered that when Boilean in Lyttelton's dialogue, referred to the critics who were disturbed by the "absurdities" and extravagant fiction" of the poem, Pope replied that Milton's "Genius was indeed so vast and sublime that his work seems beyond the limits of criticism.[88]
Gray praised in these words "unconfined by any rules but those which his own feeling and the nature of his subject demanded".[89]

Watts wrote:

Immortal Bard: Thus thy own Raphael sings,
And knows no rule but native fire.[90]

The prevailing admiration for the sublime quality of Milton's poetry was expressed by Gray in the following lines of the progress of poetry:

"Nor second he that road sublime
Upon the seraph--- wings of extasy
The secrets of the abyss to sky
He passed the flaming bounds of place and time
The living throne, the sopphire-- blaze,
Where angels tremble when they gaze,
He saw, but blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless might".[91]

Gold Smith remarks in praise of Milton "seems to have rivalled and excelled all other Epic Poets "Paradise Lost according to this treatise, is "wonderfully described, painted with such bold and noble strokes, and delivered in such nervous language so original and noble in its plan and contrivance and wrought up with such wonderful art" there is noblesness and sublimity in the whole--- which transcends, perhaps, that of any other poem.[92] Shelly opostropises him in Adonais:

"He died
Who was the sire of an immortal strain
Blind,old and lonely, when his country's pride

The Priest, the slave, and the liberticide,
Transpled and mockecd with many a loathed rite
of lust and blood he went, unterrified,
Into the gulf of death, but his clear sprite
yet reigns over earth, the third among the sons
of light".[93]

Byron in the dedication to Don Juan:

If fallen in evil days on evil toungs
Milton appealed to the Avenger, Time,
If time, the Avenger, exercrates in wrongs,
And makes the world "Miltonic" mean "sublime"
He deigned not to belie to a crime,
He did not loathe the Dire to laud the son
But closed the tyrant-hater be began.[94]

JOHNSON CRITICISM ON MILTON

Johnson, one of the famous critic of English literature, made a severe attack on Milton's poetry on many times but here he joined the general chorus in praise of Paradise Lost "a poem which considered with respect to design, may claim the first place, and with respect to performances, the second among the productions of the human mind".[95]

Johnson believes that in reading Paradise Lost we read a book of universal knowledge.[96] But on the whole, however, his treatment of Milton is reactionary. Johnson loathed Milton's politics and he

disparaged his personal character at every point.

He remarks on Paradise Lost:

"The English poems, though they make no promise of Paradise Lost, have this evidence of genius,that they have a cast original and unborrowed. But their peculiarity is not excellence; if they differ from verses of tohers, they differ for the worse, for they are too often distinguished by repulsive harshness, the combination of words are new, but they are not pleasing, the rhymes and epithets seem to be laborisouly sought, and violently applied".[97]

He further says:

"Those who admire the beauties of this great poet, sometimes force their own judgement into false approbation of his little pieces and prevail upon themselves to think that admirable which is only singular. All that sort compositions can commonly attain is neatness and elegance. Milton never learned the art of doing little things with grace, he over looked the milder excellence of suavity and softness, he was a lion that had no skill in dandling the kid".[98]

He condemned Lycidas in the most violent words:

"One of the poems on which much praise has been bestowed in Lycidas of which the diction is harsh, the rhymes uncertain and the numbers unpleasing"---

In this poem there is no nature, or their is no truth, there is no art,or their is nothing news, its form is that of a pastoral easy, vulgar and therefore, disgusting, whatever image is can supply, are long age exhausted and its inherent improbablity always forces dissatisfaction on the mind ---

This poem has yet a grosser fault, with these trifling fictions are mingled the most awful and sacred truths, such as ought never to be polluted with such irrevent combinations. The Shepherd like wise is now a Feeder of Sheep, and afterwards an ecclesiartical pastor, a superintendent of a Christian Flock. Such equivocation are always unskilful, but here they are indecent and at least approach to impiety, of which, however, I believe the writer not to have been conscious. Surely no man could have fancied that he read Lycidas with pleasure, had he not known its author".[99]

He is critical even of Paradise Lost, a magnum opus of Milton, has been universally admired. he writes:

"It has been, therefore, said without an indecent hyperbole by one of his encomiastes, that in reading paradise lost we read a book of universal knowledge. But original deficience cannot be suplied. The want of human interest is always felt. Paradise Lost is one of the books which the reader admires and lays down and forgets to take up again. None ever wished it longer than it is, its perusal is a duty rather than a pleasure. We read Milton for instruction retire harassed and over burdened, and look else where for recreation. We detest our master and seek for companions".[100]

He considers it week in the human interest and finds fault with the allegorical personages, sin and death. However, despite all his prestige and authority, the earned Doctor could not stem the tide of the general admiation for Milton, it was realised that the Doctor was carried away by his political and religious prejudies and was unfair to the poet. Johnson remarks --- "Milton's allegory of sin and death is undoubtedly faulty. Sin is indeed the mother of Death and may be allowed to be the portress of hell when they stop of journey of Satan, a journey described as real, and when Death offers his battle, the allegony is broken, This unskillful allegory appears to me one of the

greatest faults of the poem and to this there was no temptation, but the author's opinion of its beauty.[101]

He further says:

"Milton, being well versed in the Italian poets, appears to have borrowed often from the, and on every man. catches something from his companions, his desire of imitating Ariosto's levity had disgraced his work with the Paradise of Fools" a fiction not in itself ill-imagined, but too Ludicrous for its place. --- Such are the faults f that wonderful performance Paradise Lost; which he who can put in balance with its beauties must be considered not as nice but as dull, as less to be consumed for want of candour, than pitied for want of sensibility.[102]

Dr. Johnson's opinion on Paradise Regained;

"Of Paradise Regained, the general judgement seems now to be right, that it is in many parts elegant, and every where instructive, it was not to be supposed that the writer of Paradise Lost could ever write without great effusion of fancy, and exalted precepts of wisdom. The basis of Paradise Regained is narrow, a dialogue without action can never please like an union of the narrative and dramatic powers. Had this poem been written not by Milton, but by some imatator,

it would have claimed and received universal praise.[103] He criticises on 'L' Allegro and II Penseroso.

"Of the two pieces 'L' Allegro and II penseroso, I believe opinion is uniform; every man that reads them, reads them with pleasure. The author's design is not, what Theobald has remarked, merely to show how objects derived their colour from the mind by representing the operation of the same things upon the gay and the melancholy temper, or upon the same man as he is differently disposed but rather how, among the successive variety of appearances, every disposition of mind takes hold on those by which it may be gratified.[104] He further says:

"Through these two poems the images are properly selected and nicely distinguished, but the colours of the diction seem not sufficiently discriminated. I know not whether the characters are kept sufficiently apart. No mirth can, indeed, be found in his melancholy, but I am afraid that I always meet some melancholory in his mirth. They are two noble efforts of imagination".[105]

On Comus he says:

"The greatest of his juvenile performances is the Mark of Comus, in which may very plainly be discovered the dawn or twilight of Paradise Lost. Milton appears to have formed very early that system of diction, and mode of verse, which his mature judgement approved, and from which he never endeavoured nor desired to deviate.

As a drama it is deficient. The action is not probable. A Masque, inthose parts where supernatural intervention is admitted must indeed be given up to all the freaks of imagination, but so far as the action is merely human, it ought to be reasonable, which can hardly be said of the conduct of the two brothers, who when their sister sinks with fatigue in a pathless wilderness, wander both aways together in search of berriester far to find their way back and leave a helpless ady to all the sadness of danger of solitude. This however,is a defect over balanced by its convenience.[106]

"The song of Comus has airness and jollity and the soliloquis of Comus and the lady are elegant but tedious. The dispute between the lady and Comus is the most animated and effecting scene of the drama, and wants nothing but a brisker reciprocation

of objections and replies to invite attention and detain it. The songs are vigorous and full of emagery, but they are harsh in their diction and not very musical in their numbers. Through out the whole, the figures are too bold, and the language too luxiriant for dialogue, it is a drama in the epic, style in elegently spendid and tediously instructive".[107]

Milton wrote only eighteen sonnets. But these little gems are realy unrivalled in Engish literature. These sonnets reveal his greatness as a poet. They assert his poetic genius. The effectiveness of his sonnets depends upon the real nature of Character, persons or incident off which each sonnet is the delineation. Sonnet become a trumpet in the hand of Milton. Milton widened and enlarged it. The effectiveness of Miton's sonnets is chiefly due to the real nature of character. His sonnets are majestic and empassioned. Milton's sonnets are a class by themseves. As Cazamian says: "They have nothing in common with the sonnets on love dear to the Eizabethan"[108]. But Johnson expresses his resentment on sonnets of Miton in such words:

"The sonnets were written parts of Milton's life, upon different occasions. They deserve not

any particular criticism, for of the best it can only be said, that they are not bad and perhaps only the eight and the twenty first are truely entitled of his slender commendation. The fabrick of sonnet, however adopated to the Italian language has never succeeded in ours which having greater variety of termination, required they rhymes to be often changed".[109]

<u>MILTON IN VICTORIOUS AGE</u>

Milton continued to be admired all through the victorious era. He had become the centre of attraction for victorious poets. As one of the best poet of victorian age as known as representative poet of the age Tennyson sings the praises of Milton in these words:-

> O Mighty-mouthed inventer of harmonies,
> O skilled to sing of time or eternity,
> God-gifted Organ-voice of England,
> Milton, a name to resound for ages.[110]

Hopkins wrote a letter in which he writes:

"I quite agree with what you write about Milton, His verse as one reads, it seems something necessary and eternal (so to me does purcells music--- Milton's art is in comparable not only in English

literature but I should think, almost in any equal, if not more than equal, to the finest of Greek or Roman. I have paid a good deal of attention to Milton's versification and collected his later rhythms. I did it when I had a lecture of rhetoric some years since I found his most advanced effects in the Paradise Regained and lyrically in the Agonistes. I have often thought of writing on them, indeed on rhythm in general I think the subject is little understood. No doubt my poetry err on the side of oddness. I hope in time to have a more balanced and Miltonic style. (Feb 15, 1879)[111].

One of the greatest poet-critic Matthew Arnold expressed his opinion in his letter.

"Milton is of all our gifted men the best lesson, the most salutary influence. In the sure and flawless perfection of his rhythm and diction he is an admirable Virgil or Dante and in this respect he is unique amongst us. No one else in English Literature and art possesses the like distinction.[112]
And further that "Milton from one end of Paradise Lost to the other, is in his diction and rhythm constantly a great artist in the great style. Whatever may be said as to the subject of his poem as to the condition under which he received his subject and treated it, that

praises, at any rate, is assured to him. That Milton, of all our English race, is by his dictin and rhythm the one artist of the highest rank in the great style whom we have, this I take as requiring no discussion, this I take as certain".[113]

"The mighty power of poetry and art is generally admitted. But where the soul of this power as its best chiefly resides, very many of us fail to see it resides chiefly in the refining and elevation wrought in us by the high and rare excellence of the great style".[114]

MILTON IN THE ROMANTIC AGE

Milton's fame and influence went on unabated in the next centuries. It as among the romantic poets that Milton was the most dynamic force. It was now that Miltonic criticism took a new turn. Milton's philosophy, theology and ethics for which he was admired in the previous age, were no longer considered as the source of his real greatness. Attention was not focussed on his poetic art, and it was realised that his real greatness lay in the imaginative range and passionate intensity of his poetry.

Admiration for Milton was a potent force in the critical thought of the late 18th century

and William Blake,the well known poet and painter, isthe supreme example of this trend of thought. Over ninty of Blake's paintings and engravings are on Miltonic subjects. As William Blake expressed his well known opinion 'Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of angels and God, and at liberty when of devils and Hell, is because he was a true poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it".[115]

This statement requires for full understanding consideration of Blake whole philosophic system but taken at its simplest it implies that only certain parts of milton's poem are the work of a 'True Poet' the product of a freely creative imagination and that the rest are the work of the reason that divides and distinguishes, fettering the creative energies of the imagination and presenting the abstractions of intellect rather than the living truths of the poetical genius.[116]

Shelly says that Paradise Lost contains within itself a philosophical reputation of that system of which, by a strange and natural anthesis, it has been a chief popular support, he praised Milton for his bold neglect of a direct moral purpose in having alleged no superiority of moral virtue to his God over his devil. Milton, he declared, did not follow a didactic purpose

but the laws of epic truth, by which a series of action of the external universe and of intelligent and ethical beings is calculated to excite the sympathy of succeeding generation of mankind.[117] Shelly admired much for these elements in his personality and poetry which coincided with their own revolutionary ideas. In his poem Adonais, Shelly ranked Milton with those poet-heroes who fought against the world for the sake of freedom and dignity.

> He died,
> Who was the sire of an immortal strain
> Blind,old and lovely,when his country's pride
> The priest, the slave and the liberticide
> Trampled and mocked with many a loathed rite
> of lust and blood.[118]

The enfluence of Milton on Byron can be seen in his Drama "Cain" in which Byron made Lucifer a champion of man's thirst for intellectual emancipation. The new age of spiritual rebellion thus adopted Milton as it ally.

Wordsworth had a juster sense of Milton's true quality and he was profoundly enfluenced by his spirit and art. His own combination of a temperate love of liberty with an intense moral earnestness was akin to Milton's and pre-disposed him to

admiration:

> Milton thou shouldest be living at this hour
> England hath need of thee, she is a fen
> of stagnent waters, alter, sword and pen
> fire side, the heroic wealth of hell and bower
> Have forfieted their ancient English dowee
> of inward happiness, we are selfish men,
> Oh raise us up, return to us again
> And give us manners virtue, freedom, power
> Thy soul was like a star and dwelt a part.

Shelly also attracted by Satan "courage and majesty and firm and patient opposition to omnipotent force" reminded his readers that "the sacred Milton was, let it ever be remembered a repubican and a bold inquirer into morals and religion.[119]

It will be observed tht Shelly here connects Milton not only with poetical but religious liberty and in the 18th century a great many did the same. Almost all of those who have been mentioned as enthusiasts over Milton and liberty were also liberals in religion; and in many instances were actively engaged in the fight for religious freedom. These men found inspiration not only in the character of Satan but in the life of the poet, in his anti-episcopal pamphlets and in such sonnets as

on the New Forcers of conscience and to Cromwell.

> thou hodst a voice whose sound was like
> Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free
> So didst thou travel on life's common way
> in cheerful godliness and yet thy heart
> The lowliest duties on herself did lay.[12]

This sonnet illustrate how deeply he had assimilated the ethical idealism of his matter. It was indeed the reading of Milton's sonnets which inspired his own master peices in this form. There is also a Miltonic quality in Wordsworth's more exalted utterences in blank verse and echoes of Miltonic phrase are frequent in his work.

Keats too was a admirer of Milton. His feeling for Milton's poetry was primarily aesthetic. Milton has enfluenced him much. The richness of Milton's expression 'Poetical Luxury' as Keats called it, was naturally attractive to this temperament, but he learned to admire the restrain and dignity which elevated Milton above his own earlier master. Keats enthusiastic study of Paradise Lost just after he had written Endymion is rightly held to have been of great enfluence in disciplinery and ennobling his later work. His Hyperion represents an attempt to compose a blank verse epic on the Miltonic plane. In both conception

and style the poem owes much to Paradise Lost. As Helen Gardner says:

Paradise Lost inspired one poem, Hyperion, which if it is to be called a failure, is a failure so glorious that it calls into question what we mean by success and that the greatest of his 'sons' was inspired by Paradise Lost to speak on Man, on nature and on HUman life in a voice that matches Milton's grave impassioned and eloquent tone but is all his own. Wordsworth is Milton's greatest son das Milton in Spensers and if we are to attempt to assess Milton's enfluence we must take into account. The prelude as well as Hyperion.[122]

Keats in his letter wrote:

I am convinced more and more every day that (excepting the human friend Philosopher) a fine writer is the most genuine being in the world. Shakespear and the Paradise Lost every day become greater wonders to me. (August-14, 1819)[123]

I always how associate Chatterton with autumn. He is the purest writer in the English language. He has no French idiom or particles like chaucer. It is genuine english idiom in english words. I have given up Hyperion -- there were too many Miltonic inversions in it -- Miltonic verse can not be written but in an

artful or rather artist's humour. I wish to give myself up to other sensations. (September 21, 1819)[124].

Sir Walter Alexander Raleigh remarks :-

"In truth, since Milton died, his name is become the mark, not of a biography nor of a theme but of a style- the most distinguished in our poetry, but the task of literate criticism is, at the best a task of such disheartening difficulty, that those whom attempt it should be humoured if they play long with the frings of the subject, and wait for courageous moments attack essentials.[125]

Further more he says:-

"By the force of his genius and the magic of his style, Milton succeeded in an attempt thought hopless by the best criticial judges of his century, and won his way through a ravine that was strewn with the corpses of his epic predecessors.

His courage and originality are witnessed also by the metre that he chose for his poem. To us black verse seems the natural metre for a long serious poem. Before Milton's day except in the drama, it had only once been so employed in an Elizabethan poem of no mark or likelihoods called A Tale of Two swanners. While Milton was writing Paradise Lost the critics of his time were discussing

whether the rhymed couplet or some form of stanza was fetter for the narrative poetry and whether the couplet or blank verse better suited the needs of drama. As no one, before Milton, had maintained in argument that blank verse was the best English measure for narrative poetry dealing with lofty themes. So no critic had even been at the pains to refute that opinion. In the year of the publication of Paradise Lost, Dryden delivered his judgement, that the rhymed couplet was best suited for tragic passages in the drama and that blank verse should be empoyed chiefly for the ighten and more colloquial purpose of comedy. Same echo of the courtly dispute then in progress between Dryden and his brother in law. Robert Howard, probably reached Milton's ear through his book seller Samuel Simonons. For it was at the request of his book seller that he added the three Miltonic sentences on "The Verse" by way of preface. With his accustomed confidence and directness of atack he begs the questions in his first words- "The measure is English heroic verse without rime," and in his closing words he takes credit to himself for his "example set, the first in English of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem from the troublesome and modern bandage of riming". In these two cardinal points, then the matter and the form of his poem-

Milton was original.[126]

MITON IN 19TH CENTURY

James Holly Hanford praises Milton in these words "It is now some two centuries and a half since John Milton gave forth his greatest poem to an alien world, consoling himself in the isoation of his evil days with the thought that whatever its immediate reception might prove to be, Paradise Lost was a work of lofty thinking and uncompromising art which would always find "fit audience though few" and which "after times" would not willingly let die. Time has amply justified his faith. Though all revolutions of taster and thought despite much "barbarous noise" of controversy and "detraction rude" the chorus of praise has risen in ever increasing volume.[127]

He further wrote :-

"An intensification and a deepening of eighteenth Century feeling for Milton was brought about by the rise of emotional religion Men like Weseley found an emportant source of inspiration in Paradise Lost,while to Cower Milton, congenial both in his art and in his religion thought became an ever present companion in the daily mediatation of the heart. The religious use of Milton, which caused Paradise Lost an a devotional work to retain even to present day a place

co-ordinate with pilgrim's progress and second only to the Bible hardly produces a critical interpretation, but it does involve a shift of attention to the spiritual and mediative aspect of the poem.[128]

He discusses about the pattern of Paradise Lost and its influences and style in these words:-

"As a Pattern of the epic Paradise Lost completely dominated the eighteenth century. Thus the Rape of Lock, despite its professed adherence to ancient models, owes perhaps more to Milton that it does to Homer or Virgil. With the serious epic of Black more its the same. In style Milton is the Father of 18th Century blank verse; and here the influence joins with the currents which set toward the romantic movement. The deeper effect of the study of the Milton are to be seen in Thomas and Cowper who found in his the serious feelings, the reverent attitude, the sincerity and warmth of poetic utterance which they missed in the writing of the school of Pope".[129]

He praises Milton's sublimity in these words:

"His poetry becomes a sublime emnodiment of will and Passion an expression of the grandeur of soul which elevated him above the pittiness of his human environment and made him stand firm against the shock of circumstance. The sublimity of Milton thus

becomes a personal quality-sublimity of soul.[130]

Denis Saurat praises Milton in these words:

"He is a poet and a man of letters and he believes in bringing every thing that is fit subject for literature into his poems. His embroidery on the main theme is rich and rarely inspired by philosophical ideas. The philosopher in him had ideas. But the peoet it was that expressed them and the poet had many things to express besides, an his own account.[131]

In the last he says:-

"We must not, there from make a mere allegory of Paradise Lost there is allegory in it and myth and symbol. But at bottom Milton is a clear rationalist mind who despires "supersitiuous" when they correspond to no clear ideas of his own. He submitted to no symboism and to no dogma. Further than he liked. The element of clearness, reason culture is predominant idn his mind, and his whole work is a same and vigorous affort towards light and freedom.[132]

E.M.W. Tillyard in his article " Paradise Lost conscious and unconscious meanings" discusses about the theme of Paradise Lost".

"The theme of Paradise Lost is less that of obedience to God than the obedience to temperance, to the rational against the irrational part of human

nature. These are to conflicts one between satan and two intemperate vices ambition and lust for power, the other between Adam and sensuality.[133]

Elmer Edgar Stoll says:-

"One of the greatest beauties of Paradise Lost lies, I think in the gradual transition from the Supernatural to the natural, in the felicitious approach and descent to the close. I have also where shown the twilight scene at the last, with its pensive mood and rhythem, the exited paid looking forward but also backward, going hand in hand but with wandering steps and slow, to be appropriate not only to the situation the end of Paradise Lost the begining of life. But to all the rest of the poem I there indicated a few of the many preparations for such a quite and consolatory ending in the drawing purpose of God to bring good out of evil, make death not only a penality but a remedy and dismiss our first parents, though sorrowing yet in peace and I there hinted at the larger internal rhythm of the poem.[134]

John Crowe Ransom in his article "a poem nearly Anonymom Lycidas" talks of Lycidas in these words.

"Lycidas is literay exercise, and so is almost any other poem earlier than the eighteenth century, the

craftman ship, the formal quality which is written on it, is meant to have high visibility".[135]

"It is also poems certain literary type with conventions of subject matter and style".[136]

And in the last he says:-

"Lycidas, for the most part a work of great art, is sometimes artful and tricky, we are disturbingly conscious of a man behind the artist. But the critic will always find too many and two perfect beauties in it ever to deal it with harshly".[137]

Sir Herbet J.C.Grierson in his article Paradise Regained and Samsan Agonistes says:-

In Paradise Lost the poet and the prophet or to putit otherwise, the poet on creator and the poet on critic, meet but fail to coalesce, come even into confict with one another, leave on the readers mind and imagination conflicting impressions. On the one hand the argument, as developed by Milton speaking in his own person or through the mouth of God and Milton, as Prof. Saurat has said, in the chief protagonist of Satan) aims at one effect, the justification of Gods ways to men.[138]

On Paradise Regained He says:-

"In Paradise Regained there is less evidence of dualism,though even here, when Christ arraign the whole of Greek philosophy and peotry, it is not to suspect some inner conflict. But in the shorter epic the dedactic predominates. The interest centre less in the story and characters than in the descriptions and dialogue".[139]

On samson Agonists he says :-

"With Samson Agonists there is an abrupt and decisive change of tone. In no poems since Lucidas have the poet and the critic of life been so at one. In the early elegy the lament for king had been sustained throughout and twice lifted to the level of more passionate intensity".[140]

Further more he says:-

"Lycidas and Samson are the most entirely sincere and spontaneous of his quite seriou poems for 'L' Alegro and II penseroso are delightful pastime".[141]

Charles Willams in (an introduction to Milton's Poems) says:-

"We have been fortunate enough to live at a time. When the reputation of John Milton has been

seriously attached. The result of this attack. Which has come form various sorces other we not noticeably sympathetic with each other. Has been to distract the orthodox defenders of Milton, and to compel the reconsideration everywhere of his power as a poet. This reconsideration of poetic glory has now reached everyone but shakespeare and, it seems, the metaphysicals and W.B.Yeats. All these, it is true, are united by one general tendency to suggests by one means or another the feeling intellect" of which Wordsworth spoke. It has been because of his supposed lack of that intellect that Milton has been chiefly repudiated. He has been supposed to be a heavy and if resounding, yet one might say, a comatose poet. He has been called personally, a bad man, Mr. Middleton Murry has said so in so many words "On the moral and spiritual side I find it easy enough to place him in he simply a bad man of a very particular kind". but Mr. Murry went on to profess himself puzzelled "The difficulty is --- that a poet so evidently great in some valid sense of the word should have so little intimate meaning for us. We cannot make him real. He does not, either in his great effects or his little ones, trouble our depth".[142]

In Paradise Lost he expresses his thoughts

in these words "The modest and appealing courage of the opening of Paradise Lost and justify the ways of God to man becomes an angelic beauty of victory".[143]

MILTON IN THE 20TH CENTURY

It is true that there was some decline in the reputation and influence of Milton in the opening decades of the 20th century critics like T.S.Eliot made a severe attack on him first for his style and dection, which according to them, was responsibe for the artificial, stereotyped diction of the pseudo-classics and second for the dissociation of sensibility in his poetry which led to a similar cleavage or dissociation in the poetry of the succeeding generations of poets. No doubt T.S.Eliot was critical of Milton's poetic style in the beginning, later on the recanted. Though T.S.ELiot's authority did much to undermine the reputation of Milton, However, such loss of reputation was but a passing phase.

Critics like Tillyard and Grierson did much to rehabilate Milton. In more recent times Davis Saurant and C.S.lewis have ably advocated the cause of Milton and stressed his real merit and greatness. Milton

theology, philosophy and ethics, as well as his art have received a more discriminative appreciation.

Some 20th century critics of Milton have emphasised the moral and ethical usefulness of Milton's poetry to a groping for standards. Among these critics mention must be made of Tillyard, Grierson, Charls Wiliams, Lewis and Douglas Bush.

Prof. Bush in particular has given many convincing reasons why we ought to respect Milton urging that his ideas are very close to what many modern thinkers have been declaring are necessary to our own necessary regeneration.[144]

He seems thus to recommend the poetry and the christian humanism underlying it as a stiff but wholesome does for the snobs, sentimentalists, and sensationalists.[145]

In the 20th Century Milton became a subject of heated controversy his debunkers included many eminent critics but the number of sympathetic critics who explored and propunded his poetry also continued to Multiply. His admires did not think it necessary to answer to charges of Milton detractors. They explained and commented indepently, using every divice of modern criticism to display the distinctive achievements of an author whom the founders to modern

critics had declared unalterably ugly.

The names of Logan Pearsal smith, Dauglas Bush, Denis Saurat and Tillyard deserve mention in the direction of critical interpretation of both Milton the thinker and Milton the artist.

Douglas Bush, one of the greatest critics of 20th Century gives his opinion on Milton's epic Paradise Lost in these words.

"In Paradise Lost, even in exalting human reason and freedom, Milton stresses human weakness and the dangers of pride, which ruin Eve and Adam as well as Satan. The fallen angels lost themselves in the mazes of Philosophic debate, the whole temptation of Eve is an appeal to the desire for Godlike knowledge and power".[146] He expresses his opinion on the theme of the major poems of Milton.

"Irreligious pride and religious humility are indeed the great theme of his major poems".[147]

On the use of blank verse the critic Douglas Bush says:-

"The use of blank verse for an heroic poem was a great innovation and Milton's handling of it added not a new province, but a new world to English prosody. But we cannot thouch upon

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technicalities or even go very for into generalities Milton's versification is of course inseparable from his diction and tone, and in recent years the organ-voice of England has been charged with an inorganically monotonous elevation of style and movement remote from the language and rhythms of common speech----.

Milton's poetic and criticial heritage and his own purpose prescribed a long poem, and in a long poem the reader must made to feel the continuity "the enormous onward pressure of the great stream" on which he is embarked it is rather idle to compare bits of Paradise Lost with the short piece of the methaphusical poets or with the dramatic texture of Shakespears or with such a totally different kind of epic as Dante's. Standing before the alter, as Milton habitually stood, he would have been profane if he had not worn his singing robes. A ritualistic elevation of style and movement may be essential to an heroic subject on colloquial realism to realistic subject and on the Miltonic level, is a much rarer phenomenon. We can hardly imagine the gap there would be in English poetry or in our own experience, if Paradise Lost were not there[148].

To Survey Milton's work from the beginning

to samson is to be a impressed by both the uniformity and the variety of style. Always senitively aware of critical theory and poetic practice he was a disciple of ovid, of the Elizabethans' of Johnson and inthose early stages he showed himself a more and more independent master of his craft. Comus looked both backward and forward. In Lycidas and the heroic sonnets began the forging of the grand style, which was to be the medium of Paradise Lost. That grandeur, however uncommon, is not un-English. In Milton and in Bacon, Browne, and other representatives of ornate sublimity, the main texture is pure English. It would be odd if it were not, since in all the essential features of his personality and work. Milton was one of the most thoroughly English of English Authors. What is more important is that he was a men and "is so far from being granite, his vese is a continual spring of beauty, of goodness, of tenderness, of humiity". The word "Miltonic" commonly applied to Paradise Lost or to the three major works of the poet's last phase really includes three very different styles, and within Paradise Lost itself there are largly variations. Those several styles were dictated by the principle of decorum, which was for Milton the artist what relgious and philosophic principals were for the man and the thinker, and the

principle of decorum, like the others, united liberty and discipline. But in Milton's general movement away from epic grandeur towards plains, undecorated, dramatic speech it is not altogether fanciful-after we here given decorum its large due to see a parallel to his in word evolution, his arrival at a deeper and more personal under standing of God and human experience[149].

He further says:-

"On the classical side Milton followed especially Virgil, the supreme model of epic decorum, and like Virgil, he gave a new meaning to the devices he imitated-celestial machinery, the roll-called and council of leaders, epic games, the recapitualatory narrative after the plunge in medias res and the unfoldingof fortune events.

It has been said that Shakespear lived in a world of time. Milton in a world of space, but for Milton space is not paralel to the spectre of devouring time which haunted so many minds of the Renainassance".[150]

Mr. D.Bush has expressed his views of Paradise Regained in these words:-

"We may notice have a paralled case in Paradise

Regained. Many readers, knowing Milton's lifelong devotion and infinite debt to the Classical Literature and thought feel a shock when they come upon Christs repudiation of the philosophy, poetry, and oratory of Greece, which has just recieved through satan the poet's beautiful afnd heart felt praise. The shock is unwarranted. Like other Christian Humanists, Milton had always set the Bible above all other writings and he gave still lighter authority to "the spirit and the unwritten it is only in comparison with the divine light of humble Christian faith and virtue that Geek philosophy, like science, appears on the product of arrogant human pride. In itself, so far as it goes it is good, Christ himself, earlier in the poem, had ranked Socrates next to job. Milton's favourite secular authors up to the end were ancients, and this very poem not to mention its companion. Samson Agonists owes much to them. His condemnation is relative rather than absolute. At the same time his vehemence here is a mark of the growing inwardness of his thought, in his age he turns more and more from a degenerate world and secondary aids to cling to ultimate truth. He is saying on his old opponent Bishop Hall, the Christian stoic, had said, that true light and peace of mind are to be won not at Athens but at Jerusalem".[151]

In the beginning of his article intitled Milton he says:-

"Who ever the third of English poets may be, Milton's place has been next to the throne, and for most of us he still stands there Like Teneriff of Atlan unremoved". But to the defeatism of the "Armistice" period 1918-39 the naturalistic passion and irresponsibility of Donne appealed much more than a passion for order and righteousness and devotion to one kind wring necessiated a zealous dislike of all other kinds. The Supreme English Artists, the only one to be matched with Virgil and Dante in what Arnold called "the sure and flawless perfection of his rhythem and diction" became the rhetorician who had crushed the fruitful metaphysical movement, divorced tought and feeling, and imposed an artificial style and prosody upon English poetry for over two hundred years, until it was freed from bondage by the metaphysical poets of our time. In addition to such recent detractors Milton has always had dubious friends. The admiration for the great rebel felt by men like Blake and Shelly was mixed with antipathy and Nineteenth century critics in general were inclind to save his "poetry" by casting his ideas overboard. In other day. While a few critics were reacting violently against him

Milton's thought began to be sriously explored and appreciated by scholars, they invoked a broader formula to unify and save the artist and thinker and the rigid son of the Reformation became the bold son of the Renaissance[152].

ELIOT'S VIEWS OF MILTON

Eliot attaks on Milton in these words:-

"While it must be admitted that Milton is a very great poet indeed, it is something of puzzle to decide in what his greatness consists, an analysis, the marks against him appear both more numerous and more significant than the marks to his credit. As a man, he is antipathetic. Either from the moralists point of view or from the theologian's points of view, or from the psychologist's point of view, or from that of the Political philosopher or judging by the ordinary standards of like ableness in human beings. Milton is unsatisfactory. The doubts which I have to express about him are more serious than these. His greatness an a poet has been sufficiently celebrated, though I think largly for the wory reasons and without the proper reservations. His misdeeds on a poet have been called attention to, on by Mr. Ezra Pound, but usually in passing".[153]

On the matter of Milton's influence on 18th Century english poetry Eliot says: "There is more of Milton's influences in the badness of bad verse of the 18th century than of anybody's else; he certainly did more harm than Dryden and Pope, and perhaps a good deal of the obloqy which has fallen on these two poets, especially the letter, because of their influence, outht to be transferred to Milton[154].

Further more he says:-

There is a good deal more to the charge against Milton than this and it appears a good deal more serious if we affirm that Milton's poetry could only be an influence for the worse upon any poet whatever. It is more serious, also, if we affirm that Milton's bad influence may be traced much further than the eighteenth century and much further than upon bad poets: if we say that it was an influence against which we still have to struggle".[155]

He drew a comparison between Shakespeare and Milton and praises Shakespeare in these words:-

"The comparison with Shakespeare offer another indication of the pecularity of Milton. With Shakespeare, for more than with any other poet in English, the combinations of words ofer perpetual novelty. They enlarge the meaning of the individual

words joined. In comparison, Milton's image do not give this sense of particularity nor are the separate words developed in significance. His languages if one may use the term with out disparagement, artificial and conventional".[156]

On Milton's Poetry he says:-

"Milton's Poetry is poetry at the forthest possible removes from prose; his prose seems to me too near to half farmed poetry to be good prose".[157]

Eliot examined the objections which have been raised against Milton;

"I came next to the positive objection to Milton which has been raised in our own time, that is to say the charge that he is unwholesome influence. And from this I shall proceed to the permanent structures of reproof (to employ a phrase of Johnson) and finally to the grounds on which I conider him a great poet and one whom poets to day might study with profit for a statement of the generalised belief in the unwholesomeness of Milton's influence I turn to Mr. Middleton Murry's critique of Milton in his Heaven and Earth- a book which contains chapter of profound insight, interrupted by passages which seems to me

intemparate. Mr. Murry aproaches Milton after his long and patient study of Keats; and it is throgh the eyes of keats that he sees Milton".[158]

"Keats (Mr. Murry writes) as a poetic artist; second to none since Shakespear and Blake, an a prophet of spiritual values unique in our history, both passed substentailly the samed judgement on Milton Life to him would be death to me". And whatever may be our verdict on devolopment of entlish poetry since Milton, we must admit the justice of Keats openion that Milton's magnificence led no where. English must be kept up, said Keats. To be influenced beyond a certain point my Milton's art we felt denounced the creative flew of the English genius in and through itself. In saying this, I think, Keats voiced the very in most of the english genius. To pass under the spell of Milton's is to be condemned to imitate is it is quite different with Shakespears.. Shakespeare baffles and liberates Milton is perspicuous and constrics".[159]

This is very confident affirmation, and I criticise it with some diffidence because I cannot pretend to have devoted on much study to Keats, or to have as intimate an understanding of his difficulties as

Mr. Murry, But Mr. Murry seems to me here to be trying to transform the predicament of a particular poet with a particular aim at a particular moment in time into a censure of timeless validity. He appears to assert that the liberative function of Shakespears and the constructive meance of Milton are permanent characteristics of those two poets".[160]

Eliot's article on Milton has been published few year ago in 1936 as he says.

The reproach against Milton that his technical influence has been bad, appears to have bear made by no more positively than by myself. I find myself saying, as recently as 1936 that this charge against Milton. Appears a good deal more serious if we affirm that Milton's poetry could only be an influence for the worse, upon any poet whatever it is more senior also, if we affirm that Milton's bad influence may be traced much farther than the eighteenth century and much further than upon bad poets; if we say that it was on influence against which we still have to struggle".[161]

On the other charge he examines as :-

"I wish first to mention another reproach against Milton, that represented by the phrase

"dissociation of sensibility". I remarked many years ago, in an essay on Dryden, that in the seventeenth century a dissociation of sensibility set in, from which we have never recovered an this dissociation, as is natural,was due to the influence of the two most powerful poets of the century, Milton and Dryden".[162]

Eliot was much impressed with Milton's language as he expresses further more.

"I repeat that the remoteness of Milton's verse form ordinary speech his invention of his own poetic languagem seems to me one of the marks of his greatness. Other marks are his sense of structure both in the general design of Paradise Lost and Samson".[163]

He condemns Samson in these words:-

"The appropriateness of the subject of Samson is too obvious to expatiate upon. It was probably the one dramatic story out of which Milton could have made a master piece".[164]

On Paradise Lost he says:-

"We must then in reading Paradise Lost, not expect to see clearly, our sense of slight must be blurred, so that our hearing may become more acute. Paradise Lost, like finnegans wake (for I can

think of no work which provides a more interesting parallel. Two great books by blind musicians, each writing a language of his own based upon english) makes this peculiar demand for a readjustment of the readers made of aprehnsion. The emphasis is on the second not the vision, upon the word, not the idea and in the end it is he unique versification that is the most certain sign of Milton's intellectual mastership".[165]

In the last Eliot recanted from his previous ideas as he says:-

"I came at last to compare my own attitude, as that of a poetical practitioner perhaps typical of a generation twenty five years ago with my attitude today, I have thought it well to take matters in the order in which have taken them to discuss first the censures and detractors which I believe to have permament validity, and which were best made by Johnson, in order to make clear the causes and the justification for hostility to Milton on the part of poets at a particular juncture and I wished to make of Milton which particularly impress me, before explaining why I think that the study of his verse might at last be of benefit to poets. In short, it now seems to me that poets are sufficiently removed from Milton and

sufficiently liberated from his reputation, to approach the study or his work without danger, and with profit to their poetry and to the English Language".[166]

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MILTON'S POETIC STYLE

AND

HIS GRAND STYLE

MILTON'S POETIC STYLE AND DICTION

Every creative writer like any other human being, learms a language or internalizes a system of rules that determines sound meaning connection. Using his competence, he creates a peiece of literature by giving shape to his feelings, thoughts and experiences.His style, if it is thought of as a way of using the language is part of the grammer of his language. Richard Ohman argues that a writer's style is his characteristic way of exercising the options available within the system of language.[1]

Style according to him envolves the notion that there are alternative ways of saying the same thing and is characterised by a preference for a certain type of syntactic process. He adds a style is part of a characteristic way of deploying the transformational apparatus of language.[2]

Style is not the name of composistion, Composition is called the proper arrangement of words, sentences and paragraphs. Style is other thing. According to W.H.Hadson 'style' is composed of roughly three elements which he classifies as intellectual, emotional and aesthatic.[3]

These sthree elements, together with others

which we will consider shortly combine to from what we call style. The more closely they are related to their thought, content, the more perfect the style becomes. For style is nothing more than the expression of thought in the best possible way, it should fit the author's thought as his skin fits his body.

Some scholoar have considered style as ornamental or some thing which is added on to thought as Incyclopaedia Brittanice says.

Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian treated style as the proper adornment of thought and this view prevailed through out the Renaissance period. During the Renaissance, Putten Lane compared style to flowers, jewels or Embroidery, even to the crimson taint which should be laid on a lady's lips. Apart from this exaggerated statement of Putten Lane, there is Samual Wesley's view that style is the dress of thought and like personal dress, it should be neat but not gauddy. In the ornamental views of style meaning precedes and is then decorated by style, but as opposed to this, the organic view of style holds that style is meaning and that style and meaniang are inseparable.

"Proper words in proper places is an another view of Jonathan Swift's dictum on style".[5] Stands

midway betwen the idea of style as something properly added to thoughts and the 20th century ideas that derive from Charles Bally (1865-1947) the Swiss philologist. According to followers of Bally, style in language arises from the possibility of choice among alternative forms of expression, as for example, between 'Children' kids, 'Young' 'Stars' and 'Youths' each of which has a different evocative value. Any expression may give rise to a variety of effects , and the effect will be more forceful as the expression deviates from normal usages. Thus style depends on choice, evocation, polyvalancy and deviation in language. This theory emphasizes the relation between style and linguistics".[6]

Relating style to the subject matter, to the writer's personality or to a whole period is also possible and several attempts have been made in these direction. There is the well known belief that tragedy demands high style, verse epistle, common poesies of love and elegies demand a middle style and satire and pastoral demand the low style. Buffon's famous dictum 'Le style C'est I homme meme" (style is the man himself) is a striking illustration of the view that the writers personality determines the style freudian also believe that an author's, style

reveals the deeper level of his personality[7]

Schopenhaur's definition of style as "the physiognomy of the mind" suggest that no matter how calculating choice may be made, a writer's style will bear the marks of his personality.[8]

Edmund Gross (Article 'style' for the 11th edition of encyclopadia Britannica-1911) remarks that 'style' is the mental picture of the man who writes.[9]

As a matter of fact, a man's style is closely connected with his personality and charater. It is an individual as his voice or walk, and just as we can recognize friends merely by his way of speeking or walking, so we can recognise a great author merely by his way of writing the of-quoted Renassance, phrase, style is mentis character the image of man his whole personality, mind heart and soul is clearly mirrored in it. It is strongly coloured by the way he thought and felt. Milton's description of Samson's blindness, in Samson Agonistes, acquires the full force of a personally felt misfortunes:

> "O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
> Irrescoverably dark, total eclipse,
> without all hope of day"[10].

There is a ring of agonised truth about those

lines which tell us, emotionally, all that Milton suffered from his blindness. Had he had his sight, he could not have writttten so movingly, nor is there another English poet (save Milton again in Paradise Lost) who depicts blindness so feelingly. This is how a man's life may effect his style. Style is regarded not merely as a kind of superstructure, but as an integral part of communication and as a key to total meaning.

The literary artist works with concepts, words and syntactic configuration. In trying to communicate meaning, he faces the problem of having to choose from among words and structures. His freedom of choice is to some extent limited by the unique structural peculiarities of the language, its idiomatic frame work and the context of situation. Ben Johnson (1573-1637) emphasizes the need of a goods style because style is an expression of personality. He suggests three things for the cultivation of a good style. "To read the best authors, observe the best speaker, and much exercise of his own style".[11]

In style, he says 'It is necessary to consider what ought to be written, and after what manner. He must first think and excogitate his matter, then choose his words and examine the weight of either". Then he says that matter and manner are vitally related. "Then

take care in placing and ranking both matter and words. That the composition be comely". His conclusion is that "Ready writing makes not good writing but good writing brings on ready writing".

Pater (1839-1893) concentrates on style the forceful expression of the vision of the artist. There are two qualities of good style which Pater calls the mind in style and the soul in style. The mind in style relates to the structural harmony in a workof art. Leaving aside all surplusage and useless words the writer plans the whole work in his mind before writing it on paper.

The other important element is soul in style. By soul in style, Pater means the infusion of the writer's personality in his writing. The writer feels something intensely and then portrays it with the same intensity so that it directly touaches the heart of the reader. By mind, the literary artist reaches us through static and objective indications of design in his work, legible to all. By soul, he reaches us some what capriciously perhaps, one and not another, through vagrant sympathy and a kind of immediate contact[12].

Style is also enfluenced by the age into which the writer is born: the school of writing,

if any, to which he belongs and the kind of art form (Epic, l;yric, drama, essay, novel etc.) which he attempts. this explains the suferficial resemblace between the writers of the same age, of the school, and of the same forms in prose and verse.

Spenser, however, much he might, effect the ancients, could not write like Chaucer, because he had been rared in the traditions of a different age. He was deedply, though perhaps unconsciously enfluenced by the contemporary intellectual and aesthetic currents of the Renaissance. In spite of all its archaisms his style is removed by nearly two centuries from Chaucher's. How different school of writing effect a man's style we can see if we compare the drama of Shakespears with those of Ben Johnson. Both were writing at the same time, subject to the same enfluence. But Shakespear, a romantic dramatist is of imagination all compact, while Ben Johnson, a dramatist of the classical school is distinguished by a noble censoriousness a self conscious avoidence of poetical effects. When the actors said of Shakespeare, thinking it creditable in him, that he never blotted a line, Ben Johnson, characteristically replied: would he had blotted a thousand: born at the same time the one sought freedom

in expression, the other subjected himself to discipline.

POETIC DICTION :

Poetic diction means the choice and arrangement of words in a line of poetry. Thus it is a matter both of vocabulery and syntax. In almost all ages, poets have used a language different from the language of every day use. Milton used a highly latinized and figurative diction for his Paradise Lost, and in this way sought to import epic dignity and elevation to his language.

Though poets in every age have used a specialised diction for their poetry, never was much attention paid to the subject as in the age of Dryden and Pope. The critical theory of the period laid great stress on the need of decorum. Decorum implied that the diction of poetry should be noble and exalted, that it should suit the genre and the characters or personages in a piece of poetry, that low and vulger should be avoided as their use is below the dignity of the poet as well as that of his reader and lastly that there must be absolute economy with use of words.

Various devices have used to achieve a noble, pure and exalted diction, diction proper for poetry

meant for refined and cultured audience. First, peripharsis or circumlocation was widely used. In this way efforts were made to a void the vulger, the archaic and that technical. Thus Pose uses, finny creatures, for fish, velvet plain, for a green table, two handed engine for a 'pair of scissors' and so on. Secondly Latin words and Latin constructions were abundantly used to import dignity and elevation. Thus Pope uses 'SOL' in place of sun. Words are frequently used both by Dryden and Pope in stheir original latin sense. Thirdly, figures of speech more particularly personication & Hyperbole, were abundently used to decoraate the language and to empart to it force, dignity and effectiveness

Dante was the first critic who, in spite of great opposition from scholars and writers, supported the claims of the vernacular against classical latin and French provence. But he did not favour slipshod native language. He pleaded that the language of poetry should be an ideal languag fit to express the best thoughts of the greatest poet. He wished that the language of poetry should be proper, elevated and illustrious. He did not agree with the view, later on upheld by Wordsworth, the poetry is just "the spantaneous overflow of powerful feelings or the

poet should be concerned with a selection of language really used by men Dante believed poetry and the language proper for it are an elaborate and painful toil" again since language is an necessary and instrument of our thought as a horse is of a knight and since the best horses are suited to the best knights as has been said "the best language will be suited to the best thoughts".[13]

In the words of Scott James "Language for Dante is powerful and a subtle instruments, without which, fitly used. There can be now worthy literature but he does not exact the instrument above that for which it is used. It is a means of expression, but that which has to be expressed comes first in order of thought and importance. In the same spirit then, in which Aristotle declared the the plot is the first thing.
Dante put first the claims of the poet's subject. It is no use asking for a grand style until you have recgnised that it can only be employed in the service of a grand theme, as conceived by a man of a great intellectural stature".[14]

The best style is characterized by the quality of loftiness or elevation and it depends

in no small measure upon excellence of vocabulary. The poet should be careful of language. So Dante pleaded for the use of illustrious varnacular. In the poetics, Aristotle says that a writer's diction should be clear but that it should also be raised above the common place to achive this elevation, he maintains, the writer must introduce unusual words, mataphors and various stylistics ornaments "for my deviating his exceptional cases from the normal idiom, the language will gain distinction".[15]

The debate on poetic diction continued since Aristotle's time. In the English Renaissance, Spenser built an eleborate poetic style using many words which were quaint or archaic even then. Milton made of Latism in Paradise Lost. Inthe eighteenth century, the idea of poetic diction, emerged poets like Thomas Gray asserted that the language of poetry was necessarily specialized and remote from ordinary language. He made use of an ornate diction which, in addition to archaisms, utilized Latinism conventional personified abstraction and many periphrases such as "finny prey" for 'fish' it was this poetic diction, with its elaborate devices of archaism, Latinity and circumlocation, that Wordsworth attached as artificial and unnatural; he denied any essential difference between the language of prose and poetry. But the idea

that there is a special language for poetry persists. The poets of the twentieth century have largely avoided the diction of Romantic Poetry just as Wordsworth and his contemporaries attempted to avoid that of their predecessors, the neo-classicists.

I.A.Richard also attempts to separate poetry from other forms of discourse, in his theory of the emotive and scientific uses of language. Lascelles Abercrombie also says "in fact literary language differs from ordinary language by the conscious and deliberate use in it of powers additional to the force of grammatical meaning: Powers which are only casually employed in common speech".[16]

Actually the pharase 'poetic diction' began to assume importance in English Literature about the 19th century. When the preface to Wordsworth's 'Lyrical Ballads' (2nd Edition 1800) raised the question whether the language of poetry was essentially different from that of Prose. In that preface Wordsworth was as much concerned to discredit the conventional use of words and pharases long associated with metre as to vindicate the genuine language of Passion. poetic diction therefore, generally means in Wordswoth's criticism, false poetic diction a fact indicated by Wordsworth himsef in his statement. There

is ittle in Lyrical Ballads of what is usually called poetic diction. In this context poetic diction means the collection of epithets, periphrases, archaism, etc. which were common property to most poets of the 18th century.

The earliest instance of diction, given in the Oxford English Dictionery in the sense it bears on 'Poetic diction' occurs in Dryden's Fables (1700). The first beauty of an epic poem consists in diction, that is, in the choice of words and harmony of numbers. Doctor Johnson praised Dryden for using poetic diction, which as a "system of words, refined from the grossness of domestic use".[17]

But Walter Raleigh pointed out that it was not Dryden but Milton who was the first to use poetic diction in English Literature. Milton wanted to create a new style that would be at once grand erocative, and sonorous, and so he avoided plain concrete terms by linking adjectives with substantives and by his inordinate use of Latinism and periphrases. The source of Pseudo-poetic diction is then Milton and not is then Milton and not Pope and his followers. The influence of Milton persist in the eighteenth century poetry, particularly in Thomson and Gray. To quote Walter Raleigh "it remains a paradox that a system of diction

employed by a blind man for the description of an imaginary work should have been borrowed by landscope-gardeners for the setting forth of their work".[18]

Most of the eighteenth century poets wrote in an artificial, stilted, empty and rhetoric diction. In a letter to his friends West (1742) Gray showed a partiality of his age for the use of language which is different from the common spech. "The language of the age is never the language of poetry; except among the French, whose verse, where the thought or image does not support it, differs in nothing from prose, our poetry on the contrary, has a language peculiar to itself; to which almost every one, that has written has added something by enriching it with foreign idioms and derivatives, nay, sometimes with words of their own composition or invention. Shakespeare and Milton have been great creators in this way and no one more licentious than Pope or Dryden, who perpetually borrowed expression from the former".[19]

One of the most important documents on the subject of poetic diction is the preface (second edition 1800) to Wordsworht's Lyrical Ballads in which he says, the mature poetic diction is natural and the false poetic diction is artificial. Wordsworth

who emphasizes the human character of the poet considers the genuine language of Passsion to be itself poetical metre being merely "super added through desirable elements.

In the preface to the Lyrical Ballads, defining the nature and function of poetry. Wordsworth says that "poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings, it takes its origin from emotions recollected in tranquility. Poetry, according to him, is not
dependent upon rhetorical and lterary devices; it is the free expression of the poets thought and feelings.

According to him, the poet is essentially a man speaking to men and so he must use such a language in poetry as used by men. He says there should be no difference between the language of prose and poetry.

<u>CONTROVERSY ABOUT MILTON'S STYLE</u> :

From the very beginning: "Milton's poetic style has been a matter of heated controversy among critics and scholars. Some critics have sung the praise of Milton's style where as some have found fault with his style. Addison for example, wrote that Milton 'has carried over language to a greater height than any of the English poets have ever done before or after him and

made the sublimity of his style equal to that of his sentiments but he could also remark that our language sink under him and was unequal to that greatness of soul which furnished him with such glorious conception".[20]

Addison wrote eighteen papers on Miton's Paradise Lost. In his examination of Paradise Lost he follows the classical authorities specially Aristotle while the subject is treated under Bossu's four heads, namely, fable character, thought and expression. Though Addison makes use of the classical rules in his criticism of Paradise Lost. Addition's aim is to vindicate the greateness of Paradise lost as an epic poem by testing it by the rules of epic poetry, and also by making a comparison on this poem with Homer's Illid and Virgil's Aeried.

The first thing he discusses in the fable or plot of Paradise Lost and find it to be in accord with Aristotle's principles. The action of an epic poem should be single, complete and great. The action of Paradise Lost is single that of the fall of man, it is complete being "contrived in hell, executed upon earth and punished by Haven". It is also great comprising "not the fate of single person or nation but all mankind". In short "every thing tht is great in the

whole circle of being, whether within the verge of nature or out of it, has a proper part assigned it in this admirable poem".[21]

But he also discusses a few defects of paradise lost. The first thing he noted is that the poem ends unhappily while Aristotle says that an epic should have a happy end. The representation of in and death in action also is not in keeping with epic principle.Such allegorical figures should have been briefly mentioned. Milton's personal reflections are said to be instrusions in the narrative. He also criticises Milton's display of vast learning. He points out some defects in the language of the poem also, for example, Beseeching for besiegning. This temted our attempt. Sometimes he uses obscure technical words or term of art when he is upon building, he mentions Doric pillars, pilasters, cornice, freeze, Architrave. When he talks of havenly bodies, we meet with Ecliptic and Eccentric, the Trepidation, stars dropping from the Zenith. Rays culminating from the Equator".[22]

Samuel Johnson had objected to the style of the poem (Paradise Lost in the life of Milton, declaring that it was based on perverse and pedantic principles, and that it was so latinized that Milton could be accused of writing no language. He expressed

his doubts about Paradise Lost in stronger terms, the poems one of the books which the reader admires and lays down, and forgets to take up again. None ever wished it longer than it is. It's perusla is a duty rather than a pleasure. At the same time could conclude that his 'Babylonish Dialect' had been made by exalted genius and extensive learning the vehicle of so much instruction and so much pleasure that, like other lovers, we find grace in its deformity".[23]

From Keat's letter it is clear that the three English poets he valued most highly were Shakespeare, Milton and Wordsworh. Before he fell under the enfluence of Miltonic blanks verse, he had compared Milton and Wordsworth as philosophers quite coolly. He said he was uncertain.

"Whether Milton's apparently less anxiety for humanity proceeds from his seeing further or no than Wordsworth and whether Wordsworth has in truth epic passions and martyrs himself to the human heart, the main region of his song".[24]

About the time of the first Hyperian Keats certainly read deeply in Milton but not excluvsively. He did not Milton up against other poets. Shakespeare and the Paradise Lost every day become greater wonders to me".[25]

Refering to his own ade to Autumn he wrote "I always comed how associates Chatterton with Autums. He is the purest writer in the English language. He has no french idiom or particles like Chaucer. It is genuine English idiom in English words. I have given up Hyperion. There were too many Miltonic inversions in it. Miltonic verse cannot be written but in artful or rather artist's humour. I wish to give myself upto other sensations. English ought to be kept up[26]. The second passage is as follows which on Miltonics and Chatterton written actually on the same day. He further says:-

"I shall never become attached to a foreign idiom so as to put it into my writings. The Paradise Lost though so fine in itself is a corruption of our language, it should be kept on it is unique a curiosity a beautiful and grand curiosity. The most remarkable production of the world. A Northern dialect accomodating itself to Greek and Latin inversions and intonations. The purest English or what ought to be the poorest is Chatterlonic the language had existed long enough to be entirely uncorrupted of Chaucer's gallicisms and still the old words are used. Chatarton's language is entirely northern. I prefer the native music of it to Milton's cut by feet. I have but

lately stood on my guard against Milton. Life to him would be death to me. Miltonic verse cannot be written but in the vein of art. I wish to devote myself to another sensation".[27].

Thus certain objections that have been levelled with some persistence against the style of Milton's mature poems. These objections are not confined to those who would belittle Milton's poetic stature, for instance, Mr. Francis Birrel think of him our second poet. He wrote of him:

"For 200 years Milton has been the school master of English poetry, and a worse school master could in some ways hardly be imagined; for in obedience to his temperament, he twisted diction and prosodoy into shapes for which they were never intended. Drydon saw this, and would have nothing to do with them"[28].

Another admirer of Milton, Mr. Earle Welbe wrote of Milton's mature poems:

"They are beyong descriptions magnificant, but they are arterio-sclerosis of English poetry. Its impulses are denied to the blood; there is very little of the negative capability which keat's noted in Shakespeare, though he is an almost

incomprable art of 'standing' the deliberately selected fact. We are in the presence of things most wonderfully made, but not of things miraculously born. Milton had almost done with miraculous birth
then he wrote, at twenty-one the 'Nativity' ode".[29]

G.M.Hopkins admires Milton in these words of praise, "Milton's art is in comparable, not only in English Literature but,I should think, alsmost in any; equal, if not more than equal, to the finest of Greek or Roman. And considering that this is sheown especially in his verse, his rhythm and metrical system, it is amazing that so great a writer as Newman should have fallen into the blunder of comparing the first chorus of the Agonistes with the opening the Thalaba as instancing the gain in smoothness and correctness of versification made since Milton's time. Milton having been not only ahead of his own time as well as all after times in verse-structure but these particular Choruses being his own high water mark".[30]

"No doubt of my poetry errss on the side of oddness, I hope in time to have a more balanced and Miltonic style".[31]

It would not be useless to quote S.Johnson's views on Samson Agonistes in which he redocules in these words "This is the tragedy which ignorance has admired

and begotry applauded".[32]

George Steiner praises the language of Milton's Samson Agonistes in the following words:

"Milton's language seems to draw after it the attendant powers of music and the dance. In certain passages the fusion is as complete as it must have been in the Choral lyrics of Aeschylus---- No theatre since that of Dionysus had heard like music".[33]

George Saintsbury, our best critic of Milton's style, a prime authority on prosody, sums up: the peculiar stateliness which redeem even conceit from frivolity of rigidity: the Unique combination of marks and weight with easye-flow the larginess of conception, imagery, scene above all, perhaps, the inimitable stamp of pharase and style-attained chiefly by cunning selection and collocation of epithet give the true Milton".[34] He goes on:

"It is only on the rarest occasions-when he attempts humour, or when be becomes simply didactic-- that the style is other than consumate in its own way.... In his poetry, he particularly effects proper names of resonane and colour, scattering them over the verse-paragraphs with an effect that is

almost pyrotechnical".[35]

Saintsburry considers that the soliloquies of Shakespears have been the source of inspiration for Milton's verse-paragraphs. He rightly says that for all the splendour and gradeur, he never perhaps, attains to the absolute zenith of expression-as does Shakespears often, and Dante sometimes, "I think this is because there is something wanting to the heart in Milton. Some lines in Shakespeare are, as I have said, the neplus ultra of this language" such lines as:

> The odd is gone, and there is nothing left
> Remarkable beneath the visiting moon,
> Burn the great sphere thou mov'st in darkling stand
> The varging shore of the world.

But Milton achievied and sustained over a vast poem of twelve Book, the grand manner proper to epic. In his own time, the poet second only to him in genius percied that Dryden paid tribute to the old puritans loftiness of mind and majesty of expressions. Saintsbury underlines this: In loftiness sublimity of thought and majesty of expression, both sustained at almost super human pitch, he has no superior and he rival except Dante. Perhaps, after all it was an advantage to be not

so very human. The magnificance of his poetical command of the language in which he writes has only to be perceived in order to carry all before it. And we may say of its grandest expression, Paradise Lost, what hazlitt said of King Lear: all that we can say must fall for short of the subject, or even what we outselves conceive of it.[36]

Saintsbury goes on saying that "It is sufficient to say that Milton is undoubtedly one of the few great poets in the history of the world; and that if he falls short of Humer, Dante and Shakespeare,

it is chiefly because he expressess less of that humanity both universal and quiet essential, which they and specially the last, but into verse. Narrowness is his fault. But the intens individuality which of often accompanies narrowness his great virtue which no poet which no writer either in verse or prose has ever had in greater measure than he, and which hardly any has been able to express with more varied and exquisite harmoney.[37]

S.T.Coloridge as a critic has high reputation who is regarded by many scholars to be the best English critic, and one of the best critics in Europe. Saintsbury concludes: "So then, there abide these three

Aristotle, Longinus and Coleridge" Arthur Symonds call "Biographia litararia" the greatest book of criticism in English. He writes of Milton's language as follows, "The language and versification of the Paradise Lost are peculiar in being so much more necessarily correspondent to each than those in any other poem or poet. The connexion of the sentences and the position of the words are exquisitely artificial, but the position is rathr ccording to the logic of passion or universal logic than to the logic of grammer. Milton attempted to make the English Language obey the logic of passion as perfectly as the Greek and Latin. Hence the occassional harshness in the construction".[38]

He finds sublimity in Paradise Lost and admires it in these words:

"Sublimity is the pre-eminent characteristic of the Paradise Lost. It is not an arithmetical sublime like Klopstock's whose rule always is to treat what we might think large as contemtibly small. Klopstock mistakes bigness for greatness. There is a greatness arising from images of effort and daring and also from those of moral endurance: in Milton both are united. The fallen angels are human passions, invested with a dramatic reality.--In the Paradise Lost the sublimest parts are the revelations of Milton's own

mind, producing itself and evolving its own greateness and this is so truly so that when that which is merely entertaining for its objective beauty is introduced, it at first seems a discord....... He was, as every truely great poet has ever been, a good man; but finding it impossible to realize his own aspiration, either in religion, or politics or society, he gave up his heart to the living spirit and light within him, and avenged himself on the world by enriching it with this record of his own transcendent ideal".[39]

William Hazlitt is one of the greatest critics of the Romantic age, so much so that some critics regard him as greater even to Coleridge. This is disputable thing but the fact cannot be denid that he is great critic. Santsburry, emphasizing his greatness as a critic, says 'But within those limits, the fertility end the felecity of his criticism are things which strike one almost dumb with admiration, and this inspite of certain obvious and in their way extremely grave faults.[40]

He writes on Milton:

Milton, therefore, did not write from casual impulse, but after a severe examination of his own strength and with a resolution to leave nothing undone which it was in his power to do. He always labours and

almost always succeeds. He strives hard to say the finest things in the world and he does say them. He adorns and dignifies his subject to the utmost; he surrounds it with every possible association of beauty of grandeur whether moral, intellectual or physical. He refines on his descriptions of beauty, loading sweets on sweets till the sense aches as them and raises his images of terror to a gigantic elevaton, that makes ossa like a want". In Milton, there is always an appearance of effort in Shakespeare, scarcely any.---- The quantity of art in his shews the strength of his genius, the weight of his intellectual obligations would have oppressed any other writer. Milton's learning has the effect of intution. He describes objects of which he could only have read in books, with the vividness of actual observation. His imagination has the force of nature. He makes words tell as pictures. He quotes few lines of Milton's poetry for the favour of his views:

> Him followed Rimmon, whose delightful seat
> banks
> Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
> Of Abbana and Phaspher, lucid streems.

The word lucid here gives to the idea all the sparkling effect of the most perfect landscape".[41]

Sir Walter Allexander Raleigh, a critic of high reputation had admired Milton's style in these words of praise, "In truths, since Milton died, his name is become the mark, not of a biography nor of a theme, but of a style. The most distinguished in our poetry".[42]

He further says:-

"By the force of his genuis and the magic of his style, Milton succeeded in an attempt thought hopeless by the best critical judges of his century and won his way through a ravine that was strewn with the corpses of his epic predecessors".[43] Again he says:-

"His style is not a simple loose-flowing garment, which takes its out line from its natural fall over the figure, but a satin broacade, stiff with gold, exactly fitted to the body. There is substance for it to clothe but, as his imitators quickly discovered, it can stand alone. He packs his meaning into the fewest possible words and studies economy in every triffle. In his later paoetry there are no gliding connectives; no polysllabic conjunctive clauses which fll the mouth while the brain prepares itself for the next word of value; no otiose epithets and very few that court neglect by their familiarity.

His poetry is like the eloquence of the Lord Chancellor Bacon, he described by Ben Janson--- "No man ever spoke neatly, more pressly, more weightily or suffered less emptiness, less idleness is what he uttered.No number of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough, or look aside from him, without loss".[44]

"It is this quality of Milton's verse that makes the exercise of reading it aloud a delight and a trial. Every word is of value (There is no mortar between the stones) each is held in place by the weight of the others, and helps to uphold the building. In reading, every word must be rendered clearly and articularly to drop one cut, or to slur it over is to take a stone from an arch. Indeed if lamb and Hazlitt are in thinking that Shakespear's greatest plays can not be acted, by the same Token. Milton's greatest poems cannot be read aloud. For his most sonorous passages the human voice is felt to be too thin an instrument; the lightest word in the line demands some faint emphasis, so that the strongest could not be raised to its true value unless it were roard through some melodious megaphone. The carefully jewelled mosaic style was practised very early by

Milton. It occurs already in the hymn on the nativiity:

"See how from far upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet
O run prevent them with thy humble ode
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet".[45]

"The close-wrought style of Milton makes the readin of Paradise Lost a hard task in the sense, that it is a severe intellectual exercise, without relaxation. The attention that it demands, word by more, and line by line, could not profitably be given to most books: so athat many readers, trained by a long course of novel-reading to nibble and browse through the pastures of literature, find that Milton yields little or no delight under their treatment and abandon him in despair".[46]

In the last he says:-

"Of all English styles Milton's is best entitled to the name of classic".[47]

Henry wotton, Milton's earliest critic, speaks of in a letter to Milton, as "a certain Doric delicacy in your songs and odes, where unto I must plainly confess to have seen yet nothing parallel in our language".[48]

He again remarks:-

"But a reader of Milton must be always upon duty:

he is surrounded with sense: it rises in evey line, every word is to the purpose".[49]

"Other Romantics were prepared to admire Milton whole heartedly, but very much on their own terms. For Blake, he was a true poet and of the Devils party without knowing it. Shelly asserting that Milton's Devil as a moral being if for superior to this God, claimed that his bold neglect of a moral purposoe is the most decisive proof of the supermacy of Milton's genius. The victorian Bagehot, though paying tribute to the beauties of Milton's poetry, felt that thee was a radical fault in the structure of his greatest poem. Paradise Lost, as a whole, is radically tainted by a vicious principle. It professes to justify the ways of God to man, to account for sin and death, and it tells you that the whole originated in a political event....... Bagehot was anticipating the detailed criticisms of the structure of Paradise Lost made by the late A.J.A.Waldock, just as Johnson's and Keat's reservations about the poems diction were to be amplified by Eliot and Leavis".[50]

C.S.Lewis, one of the most admirers of Milton's style writes:

"It is common to speak of Milton's style as organ music. It might be more helpful to regard

the reader as the organ and Milton as the organist. It is onus he plays, if we will let him".[51]

Mr. Douglas Bush expresses his view on Milton's style as follows:-

"Then the ancient poets commonly used an artificial 'poetical' style which, like Milton's raised the mind above everyday things. Milton's style is no more remote from popular English than Virgil's is from popular Latin, or Homer's from popular Greek. Besides, much of what in Milton is loosly condemned as classical idiom is rather an effect of condemnation".[52]

He goes on writing "Milton" style was the natural accompaniment of his view of the function of poetry. He was the last Englsh poet whosoe unfied mastery of learnign might fairly justify the claim of the votes to be a teacher of his age".[53]

Arnold was the greatest and most influential critic of the Victorian age. His criticism is of great historical importance. He did an invaluable service to the cause of literature and criticism. He remarks on Milton's style in these words: Comparing Shakespear and Milton:- Shakespear of devinely strong rieb and attractive but sureness of prefect style

Shakespeare himself does not posses. I have heard a politician express wonder at the treassures of political wisdom in a certain celebrated scene of Troilus and Cressdida, for my part I am at least equally moved to wonder at the fantastic and false diction in which Shakespeare has in that scene clothed them. Milton from one end of Paradise Lost to the other is in his diction and rhythm constantly a great artist in the great style. Whatever may be said as to the subject of his poem, as to the conditions under which he received his subject and treated it that praise, at any rate, is assured to him......... That Milton of all our English race, is by his diction rhythm the one artist of the highest rank in the great style whom we love: this I take as requiring no discussion, this I take as certain".[54]

Matthew Arnold's view of Milton's poetic style which he expressed in his lecture on Milton in the year 1888 in which he declared is the expresed sure and flawless perfection of his rhythm and diction he is an admirable as Virgil or Dante and in this respect he is unique amongst us. No one else in English Literature and art possesses the like distinction".[55]

CRITICS OF 20th CENTURY ARE CRITICAL OF HIS STYLE

In the 20th Century, Milton's Poetic style

has been assailed by many well known critics like Middleton Murry, Hurbert Reed, Bonany Dobress, F.K.Lucas and T.S.Eliot who have all expressed grave doubts or objections to Milton's pre-eminence as a poet. But the full weight of the attack on Milton's established reputation can be located in three specific documednts: T.S.Eliot's "A note on the verse of John Milton, first published in Essays and studies in 1936, F.R.Lavis's Essay in Revalution" Milton's verse (to which must be added his subsequent essays 'Mr. Eliot and Milton' and in defence of Milton, included in the common pursuit 1952 and A.J.A.Wedlock's Book, Paradise Lost and its critics, published in 1947.

It is noteworthy that most of the modern critics who attacked Milton did not elaborate their case against him at all and those (for example, Eliot and Leavis) who elaborated, did it very late in a mood of recapitulation and restrospect. The modern reaction against Milton began near about 1914, but for the next two decades, no important critic thought it worthwhile to make out a full case. The climax of this attack if not the high point, was Mr. Eliot's assertion, made in 1935 and withdrawn in 1947 that 'Milton's poetry could only be an influences for the worse, upon any poet

whatever'[56] and Mr. Leavis challaenge which is still unwithdrawn, regarding 'Samson Agonistes'. How many cultivated adults could honestly swear that they had ever read it through with enjoyment'.[57] Mr. J.Middleton Murry said that Milton has a little intimate meaning for us... he does not, either in his great effects or his little ones, touch our depths'.[58]Sir Herbert Reed wrote that "his thought was a system apart from his poetic feeling--- he did not think poetically but merely expounded thought in verse".[59] Mr.F.L.Lucas declared that Milton imposed "marmoreal stiffness" on the language that his organ voice had vox humana".[60]

While Mr. Ezra found exercised, over the years, a running feud against Milton, now touching casually on his "complete ignorance of the things of the spirit" now gracefully mentioning the gross and utter stupidity and obtuseness of Milton".[61] Pound led the way by casual reference like "the difinitness of Dante's presentation, as contrusted with Milton's rhetoric".[62] "Donkey eared Milton"[63] "Abominable dog biscuit of Milton's rhetoric"[64]. Latinized English of Milton[65] and so on. Middleton Problem of style" contains a few poragraph comparing Milton with Shakespear: those paragraphs, together with his review of bridges Milton's propsody in

the Athenaeum, a few remarks in 'Studie in Keats new and old and three essays on Milton to be found in his Heaven and Earth, make up almost all of his significant criticism of Milton.

The modern case against Milton was elaborated by Eliot and Leavis, and for the purpose of the present equing, Eliot's two essays on Milton and Leavis three essays may be taken to represent the full case against Milton.

REVALUATION BY ELIOT :

Eliot begins his essay with the fortnight statement that which it must be admitted that Milton is a very great poet indeed it is something of a puzzle to decide in what his greatness consists. As a matter of fact as a man, Milton appears antipathetic to Eliot. As he says "Either from the moralist's point of view, or from the theologian's point of view, or from the phychologist's point of view, or from that of the political philosopher or judging by the ordinary standards of likeableness in human beings, Milton is unsatisfactory".[66]

To the 1936 volume of the Essays and Studies by the mebers of the English Association, T.S.Eliot contributed an essay entitled "A note on the verse

of John Milton". In this essay, Eliot levelled certaincharges four in the main against Milton's poetic language.

1. That at no period is the visual imagination conspicuous in Milton's poetry.[67]
2. That Milton writes English like a dead Language.[68]
3. That Milton's poetry exercised a bad enfluence upon later English poetry.[69]
4. Milton uses a magniloquent style which soon becomes monotonous[70]

In his Presidential Lecture to the Virgil Society in 1944 Eliot sought once again, an occasion to say a word about Milton's achievement "Milton was in a better position" Eliot said "To have a critical sense of a past in English Literature than his great pradecessors. To read Milton is to be confirmed in respect for the genius of Spenser and in gratitude to Spenser for having contributed towards making the verse of Milton possible. Yet the style of Milton is not a classic style: it is a style of a language still in formation, the style of a writer whose master were not English, but Latin and to a less degree Greek. This, I think, is only saying what Johnson and in turn Landor said when they complained of Milton's style not

being quite English.[71]

On the matter of Milton's deficient visual imagination, this is what Eliot has to say:

"The most important facts about Milton, for my purpose, is his blindness. I do not mean that to go blind in middle life is itself enough to determine the whole nature of a man's poetry. Blindness must be considered in conjuction with Milton's personality and charcter and the peculiar education that he received, it must also be considered in connection with his devotion to, and expertness in the art of music. Had Miltn been a man of very keen senses--- I mean of all the five senses --- his blindness would not have mattered so much. But for a man whose sensuousness such as it was, had been withered early by book-learining, and whose gifts were naturally aural, it mattered a great deal. It would seem indeed, to have helped him to concentrate on what be could do best".[72] and he clinches his point of view with a sentence:

"At no period is the visual imagination conspicious in Milton's poetry, to explain his point of view for the lack of visual imagination. He quotes from king Duncan's speech in Macbeth of Shakespear:

This guest of summer.

The temple--haunting martlet, does approve,

By his loved manisionny that the heaven's, breath

Smalls wooingly love: no jutty, frieze,

Buttners, nor coin of vantage, but this bird,

Hath made him pendant bed and procreant craddle,

Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed The air is delicate.[73]

And finally Eliot observes that such a passage conveys the feeling of being in a particular place at a particular time a feeling which Milton's word picture never give him. Amalandu Bose makes an analysis of Eliot's charge of visual imagination in these words:

Eliot quotes from Book-I

Him Haply slumbering on the Norway foam

The Pilot of some small night founded skiff,

Deeming some island off, as sea men tell,

With fixed anchor in his scaly rind

Moors by his side ---

And he comments that if the ship has foundered in the night (i.e.sunk) then it can hardly anchor itself to the side of the whale.[74] Leavis comments this as a just criticism of the poem.[75] If, however, Eliot had

consulted the O.E.D. about meaning of foundered, he would have realized that Milton is using the word not in our sense of 'to sink or be destroyed, but in the sense of 'to be stuck fast in--- a sence in which, as the O.E.D. points out, Chaucer had also used the word in the Knights tale. If the word is rightly understood, the passage makes perfect sense: The Ship has got stuck in the darkenss, and moors itself to the whale. Eliot quotes MoLoch's speech in Book-II

For while they sit contriving, shall the rest
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
The signal to ascend, sit lingering here---.

And commedts in a footnote that in one line the Millions are standing, and in the next they are sitting and suggest that this is a sign that Milton failed to visualize what he was saying.[76] Leavis applauded this criticism.[77] But Christopher Ricks has pointed out of the faiture is not Milton's but Eliot's.[78]

Blindness was certainly a signally important event in Milton's life, yet it is inexplicable why Eliot should attach so much importance to Milton's blindness in the context of the poets imagery. It was not that Milton was born blind or that he lost his eye-sight very early in life; he went blind when he

lived in a house in petty France, Westminister, some time in 1651 when he was forty three. As Edward Phillips says, his sight, what with his contined study, his being subject to the headache, and his perpetual tampering with physic to preserve it, had been decaying for above a dozen years before and the sight of one eye for a long time clearly lost.[79] As Milton himself admitted "I was born in London of an honest family-- My father desined me from a child to the pursuits of literature: and my appetite for knowledge was so voracious that from twelve years of age, I hardly every left any studies or went to bed before mid-night".[80]

"If Tennyson's short sight and the Hindi poet Surdas's blindness and (according to tradition) Homer's blindness did not prevent them from building up visual imagery of even a very minor poet, the young victorian philip Bourke Marston, who lost his sight at the age of three and died at the age of thirty seven, could write image-rich poetry that elicited the admiration of D.G.Rossetti, it is not possible to understand why Eliot should consider Milton's going blind in the fifth decade of life an obstacle to his creation of visual imagery. Yeats was tonedeaf but the sonal value of his imagary is

impeccable. Blindness ire may be permitted to believe, was at least partly responsible for the brooding. Introvent character of Milton's later poetry and as any one who has read Paradise Lost and Samson Agomistes, knows Milton was harrowingly aware of his loss of sight. That Milton was a very learned poet is also an indubitable and universally known fact, but to say that blindness conspired with early bookreading to dry up the sap of Milton's poetic sensuousness O frivolous attempt some how to justify an untenable thesis. Milton's sense- perception was very-- eminently aural and same of his finest imagery is sonal in character and effect. Yet that fact need not stand in the way of his employment of visual imagery. (In Tagore's poetry, at a rough estimate the ratio between visual imagery and the auditory would be about three to one, and yet the loftiest achievement of Tagore's imagination is in the auditory emagery).

The pre-eminence and pre-ponderance of auditory imagery in Milton does not prevent him from employing with unrivalled mastery--- visual imagery.

Eliot may have gone through the complete work of John Milton. But it is a matter of surprise that why he did not find the elements of visual imagination in his poetic out put, a few illustrations

are as follows which display the Milton's visual imagination: On the morning of Christ's nativity, he goes on to give a picture of peace descending on the world at the nativity:

But peaceful was the night
Wherein the prince of light
His reign of peace upon the earth began
The winds, with wonder whist
Smoothly the water kiss.[81]

And the yellow-skirted fayes
Fly after the Night-steads, leaving their
Moon loved maze on time.[82]

The lazy leaden-- stepping hours
(C.P.Leaden-eyed despair: Keats)

One May Morning
Now the bright morning star day's harbinger
Comes dancing from the East, and leads with her
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.[83]

'L' Allegro and II Pensensos which are known as companion poems written in his residence at Cambridge, show his visual imagination. he gives pastoral imagery. 'L' Allegro:

While the plowmen near at hand
Whistles over the furrowed land

And the milk maid singeth blithe

And the mower whats his seythe

And every Shepherd tell his tale

Under the haw thorn in the dale.[84]

'L' Allegro:

The cock with lively din

Scatters the rear of darkness thin

And to the stack, or the Barn-done

Stoutly struts his Dames before.[85]

II Penserose:

Till civil--suited Morn appear

While rocking winds are piping land

Or usherd with a Shower still

When the gust hath blown his fill

Ending on the russling leaves

With minute--- drops from the Eaves.[86]

A Mark

Subrine fair

Listen where thou art sitting

Under the glasic, cool-translacent wave,

In twisted braids of Lillies knitting

The loose train of they amber-dropping hairs.[87]

Lycidas

The still morn went out with sandals gray.[88]

These are a few examples of his highly sensitive

visual imagination of his early poetry.

ARCADAS:

Stay gentle swains, for though in his disguise.
I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes.[89]

COMUS:

By dimpled brook and fountain brim
The word nymphs, decked with daisies trim
Their merry wakes and pastinus keep
What hath night to do with sleep?[90]

A SAMSON AGONESTES :

O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverable dark, total eclipse
Without all hope of day.[91]

The sun to me is dark
And silent as the moon
When she deserts the night
Hid in her vacant inter lunar care.[92]

PARADISE LOST:

Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
The Imperial Ensigr, which fall advanct
Shon like a Meteor streaming to the wind
with Gemms and Golden lusture rich imblazed,
Seraphic arme and Tropihies.[93]

Book VI Damaskt with flowers:

Book VII Pouderd with stars

Book V Coverd with pearly grain

BookIV Vegetable gold

Book VIII liquid lapse of murmuring streams

These delicacies

I mean of Taste, sight, smell, harbs, fruits, Flowers,

Walks and the melodie of Birds:

ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITEANICA ALSO CALLS HIS POETRY FULL OF VISUAL IMAGINATION:

"The more one reads Paradise Lost the more one recognizes Milton's power of emayination and organisation.

An important thing to be mentioned inthe context is that in course of time Eliot charged his views on many subjects. At one time he (1968 9-21) described Milton's language as "Artificial and conventional" and said that there was more of Milton's enfluence in the badness of the bad verse of the eighteenth century than of any body else but later (1968:27-48) he changed his opinion about Milton. In one of his writing he (1948) says that he can not appreciate epigrams because his "taste is too romantic"

but in most of his writing (e.g.Eliot 1951) he takes an extremely anti-romantic stand by emphasizing the concept of impersonality, tradition and craftmanship in art and literature. At one time he (1928) said that he was a classical in literature, a royalist in politics and an Ango-Catholic in religion but later he expreseed his unhappiness about his statement because although his beliefs about religion and monarchy were changed, he (1965-15) "would not be inclined to express it is quite this way." His enthusiasm even for his two terms "dissociation of sensibility" and objective correlative which have so often been mentioned in the critical writings of the last few decades wanes towards in the end of his life and he (1965-19) prophesies that if these terms are considered important it will be 'only in their historical context by scholars intrested in the mind of his generation. He (1965) has explicitly said that when discussing his critical writings are showed not assume 'I had' at the outset of my carreer as a literary critic sketeled out the design for a massive critical structure and spent the rest of my life feeling in details".[94] But there are no indications in his Published literature that at any stage of his life, he changed his view on the importance of language in literature or on the need for

an objective, analytical and date-oriented approach. Bernard Bergonzi writes:

"Mr. Eliot, infact, attempted a refutation of his own criticism in his British Academy Lecturer as Milton delivered in 1947, though one must remark in passing that it is rather less impressive as a critical performance than his first essay. The essence of Eliot's changed position was that in 1936 he thought that Milton could only be a thoroughly bad example for poets, where as in 1947 he had come to think that he might be rather a good one we are increasingly seeing Eliot's critical writing-- the best of them, at least-- as the working observations of a practising poet rather than as the excathdra pronouncement of an infalliable leader of literary taste, and the change seems to me all to the good. Eliot in his criticism accepted what
he could we- Do me, Dante Bandelair and rejective what he could not: Milton above all.[95]

REVALUATION BY LEAVIS :

Milton's grand style has been brutally attached by F.R.Leavis in 1933[96]. He started his attack with the assertion that Milton had already been dislodged from his eminence. In this respect he referred to the

Eliot's creative and critical achievement and to the hostile criticism by Middleton Murry. In 1936 when an article of Eliot "Note on the verse of John Milton" was published, basis article was reprinted in Revaluation.[97] And if hither to Milton had not been dislodged, these two essays certainly managed to shake up his reputation. Now other critics rushed to the attack or defense of his style: the great Milton controversy had started. No doubt, Leavis is still and unrepentent hater of the style of Paradise Lost.[98]

According to Leavis the main defect of Miltonic grand style is that it does not permit any subtle or sensitive expression of the movements of actual sensory experience, Milton exhibits a feeling for words rather than a capacity for feeling through words, we are often in reading his, moved to comment that he is 'external' or that he works from the outside.[99]

Robert Martin Adams writes:

"Most of the onslaughts against Milton's verse bear remarkable wide of this matter of Genre Mr. Leavis has voiced strong protest agaisnt the Ponderous beat of Milton's verse-- 'against the routine gesture, the heavy fall of the verse--- the foreseen thud that comes

so inevitably, and at last, irresistably". The grand style he declares is monotonous, the only people who after an honest interrogation of experience can say they find variety in it are the classically trained.[100]

Thus Lavis opened the discussion with the well known announcement about Milton's dislodgement. "Milon's dislodgement he declared "in the past decade, after his two centuries of predominance, was affected with remarkably little fuss", as was natural the admirers of the poet were taken by surprise. How could a classic like Milton be dislodged in a decade, and that too "with remarkably little full". In the twenties, the decade of the reported dislodgement, Milton's position, of anything, seemed strengthened by scholarly studies like Havents". The enfluence of Milton on English poetry (1922) Saurat's Milton man and thinker (1925) and Tellyand's Milton (1930) on the other hand there was no ambiguity about Leavis statement. Some other critic had gone to the extent of claiming that Eliot had "destroyed Milton in a parenthesis".[101]

Leavis himself explained his well known pharase "Milton's dislodgement" in the essay "Mr. Eliot and Milon" inthe common pursuits. "The facts" he

re-affirmed. (as I saw and see them) are that, when Mr. Eliot began to write, Milton had long been prepotent as an enfluence in taste and practice, and that as a result of Mr. Eliot's work, he ceased to be that at any rate, is what the passage says.[102]

In respect of his 'Milton' dislodgement, Leavis tried to bring out what he considered to be the inherent limitation of Milton's verse. "We dislike his verse" said Leavis and believe that in such verse 'no highly sensuous and perfectly make believed world' could be evoked. Even in the first two books of Paradise Lost, where the myth has vigorous life and one can admire the magnificant invention that Milton's verse is we feel, after a hundred lines, oru sense of dissatisfaction growing into something stronger. In the end we find ourselves protesting against the routine gestures, the hearing fall of the verse, flinching from the foreseen thud that comes so inevitably, and at last, irresistibly: for reading Paradise Lost is a matter of resisting, of standing up against, the verse-movement of subduing it into something tolerably like sensitiveness, and in the end our resistance is worn down, we surrender at last to the inescapable monotony of the ritual.[103]

BERGENZI WRITES:

"If we read carefully through Leavis's essay

on Milton, we soon become aware that his major evaluative terms are expressive, subtle or subtlety, sensitiveness. These it appears are the qualities which Leavis values above all in poetic language and which Milton conspicuously lacks. Whether his use of the word expressive points to an unlikely (are would have thought) link with the aesthetic of Grace I do not know; but in general one can assert that these three terms are all closely linked with the "organicist or vitalist kind of metaaphorical thinking that underlines much of Leavis's crtical writing (and which is expressed elsewhere in his celebrated use of the word 'life' as a major evaluation terms of absolute and unquestionable value). For Leavis, the language of poetry should follow as closely and expressively as possible the subtle and delicate movements of actual Sonsory experience. Ideally we should not be aware of the words as words at all; rather, we should be directly aware of a tissue of feeling and perception. Effective Poetic language should be fairly close to speech to speech that belongs to the emotional and sensory texture of actual living and is in resonance with the nervous system. The last phrase seems to indicate a clear cross reference to the ideas of Rechard as expressed in principles of literary

criticism. This closeness to what he calls the emotional and sensory texture of actual living it will be apparent, an enforming principle--- if not the enforming principle in Leavis's criticism".[104]

The rest of Leavis criticism may be summerized in pharase like "stylized gesture and movement" "the dissatisfied sense of a certain hollowness" "a certain sensuous poverty" he laboured pedantic artifice of the diction" "a feeling for words rather than a capacity for feeling through words" "the rhthmic deadness, the mechanical externality" and his grand style is, in fact tyrannical stylization and so on.

REMOTENESS FROM COMMON SPEECHES NOT DEFECT

The remoteness of Milton's style from ordinary speech was a necessity, in as much as he had choosen to write an epic which demands an elevated style. In the words of Tillyard, "The heightened style of Paradise Lost was something demanded of him as an epic poet with a rigour against which there was no possible appeal.[105]

The appropriateness of Milton's style is vividly explained by Robert Martin in these words:

"Milton's style, like his intellectual talents and verbal habits generally, was ideally suited to the sustained narrative sweep and high dignified style of epic or classical tragedy, it was not a style well suited to the intimate depiction of several individual characters, not except for occassional contemptuous pharases, a colloquiel style, nothing could mean less than a contrast of Milton is epic style with Denne's lyrical conversational one or Shakespeare's dramatic one which did not take into account the different purposes irre by the different style. An epic style is narrative, dedectic, rhetorical, continuously elevated and directly exemplary, it cannot go very for in the direction of becoming colloquinal or witty or social without ceasing to be epic, it cannot shift tone radically or modulate very far from its major key without seriously throwing things of balance, it simply cannot compete for flexibility and rhythmic variety with the stage or the dramatic lyric.[106]

The Epic Devices have been used with Great Artistic beauty.

As a matter of fact Milton's poetry is full of exalted, unusual and arresting words. He, a number of words, coined and used them entirely different

meanings. There are periodic sentences and periphrases. Douglas Bush is of opinion that these and other devices compel attention, heighten dignity, energy and intensity and govern imaginative and emotional responses. Douglas Bush does not agree with the change that Milton made English a foreign language and he say that a close reading will show that the epic devices are richly functional and hardly ever mechanical.

"THE STYLE OF PARADISE LOST DOES NOT LACK VARIETY"

It is said that Milton's style is elevated exalted and grand through out but it lacks veriety. But it is not justified. It is near to the fact that Milton's grand style is different from Shakespeare's which has amazing and infinite variety but Milton's style is not so dull and monotonous as some critics would like us to believe. At several places in Paradise Lost we find him simple and deeply moving passages.

John Wain praised in these words:

"Milton was one of our greatest masters of the plain style. He knew how to write that utterly bare piognant poetry which is reached by passing away every thing except in the final words that make the final sense".[107]

"MILTON'S VAST LEARNING BECAME A PART OF HIS POETIC SENSIBILITY"

The condemnation of Milton's style on the ground that it is allusive and is replets which far fatched and recondite references is not proper. The allusions and reference in Milton's poetry have not been used as ornaments or devices.

J.H.Harford says:

"The materials of learning have become associated with sensuous imagery with moving poetical ideas. Milton is erudite, but all erudition is not for him of equal value. Winnowed, humanized, and touched with the fire of imagination his studies have passed into vital experience and afford him as natural a body of poetical data as birds and flowers".[108]

"Avoidance of Simple Sentence is conducive to the Epic Narrative".

C.S.Lewis's has pointed out that continuity is an essential element of the epic style and Milton introduced this continuity of style by an avoidence of what grammarians have called the simple sentence. According to Lewis, the general feeling that Milton's poetry leaves on us is that something highly

concentated is before the reader, flow of speech does not face apart in to separable lumps that the reader is following a great unflagging voice. Lewis has examined the following piece from the Book I of Paradise Lost and points out that the lines produce on the reader's mind all the required impressions-the lost glories of heaven, the first plotting and planning, the hopes and hazards of the actual war and the misery, the ruin and the pit. But the complex syntex has not been useless. It has preserved the contabile. It has enabled you to feel, even within these few lines, the enormous onward pressure of the great stream on which you are embarked and it most any sentences in the poem will illustrate the same point:

> "If thou beest he but O how fallen: how changed
> From his who in the happy Reals of Light
> Clothed with transcendent brightness didst out shine
> Myriads though bright: if he whom mutual league
> United thought, and counsels, equal hope
> And Lazard int he glorious Enterprise,
> Joynd with me once, now misry has joyed
> In equal ruin: into what Pit thou seest.
>
> From what Lighth Fallen (I 84)

In the last, his views is as follows:-

"Though no modern poet is likely to be reduced into attempting another Paradise Lost, the problem at hand is simply to make easier some sympathy for the Paradise Lost we already passes even, one might say at the risk of taking the poem, at something less than its highest valency. It was one of the most generous and accomplished masters of miniature. Andrew Marwell, who made it Milton's special praise that he sang:

With so much gravity and ease,
And above humane flight does soar aloft,
With plume so strong, so equal and so soft:
And it is in terms like these that we ought to praise ,
Milton if only we were able.[109]

In the last, it would not be vain if I quote W.S.Landar words about Milton's poetry "I recur to it incessantly as the noblest specimen in the world of eloquence harmony and genius".[110]

MILTON'S GRAND STYLE

Milton's style has been called grand style because it has always an unmistakable stamp of sublimity and majesty. His diction is grand and majestic and the language which he employes is the language of special art and not the language which man normally use to express their feeling. It is not certain how this expression originated but it has become associated with Mathew Arnold, Since he defined it in his lectures on Translating Homer, in these words "The grand style arises when a noble nature poetically gifted, treats with simplicity or with severity a serious subject". It is impossible to agree with this definition of "Grand Style" defined by Arnold and to apply it at all the great poets whome even he could have regarded as great, Saintsbury thinks that Arnold's description of grand style is a fresh formulation of the classical restrained, definitenes, proportion, from against the Romantic value, the Romantic Fantacy.[111] Perhaps it does not seem to be unreasonable to suppose that Arnold got the hint of the phrase "grand style" from longinus who expressed his views on the quality of sublimity in his treatise on the sublime. According to Longinus "The sublime consists in a certain loftiness and

consummateness of language, and it is by this and this only that the greatest poets and prose writers have won pre-eminence and lasting fame".[112]

It is particularly applicable to the style of Homer in the Illiad of Dante in the Divine Comedy, and of Milton in Paradise Lost. To a student of English literature who knows little about Greek or Italian. Milton will be the best example for them as Arnold says- "This master in the great style of the ancients is English"[113] and again he remarks in these words.

"That Milton, of all our English race, is by his dection and rhythm the one artist of the highest rank in the great style whome we have; this I take as requiring no discussion, this I take as certain".[114] From Paradise Lost, Arnold quoted the following passage and discribed it as Miltonic".

Darkned so, yet shone
Above them all the or changed, but on his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrenched and care
Sat on his faded cheek".[115]
"And courage never to submit or yield.
And what is else not to be overcome".[116]

It is undeniable fact that Milton's style in Paradise Lost in rich and full of splendour, imagination

in the highest degree. Severity, restraint, association of ideas, aptness of expression, of loftiness of Tone are the outstanding characteristic of Milton's poetry. These qualities invite the readeıs attention so frequently is that great poem that illustration is hardly necessary. Here, however, is a famous passage, describing the phantom figure of Death, which only a vivid imagination could conceive, an experienced pen depict, a strong sence of descipline restraint from excess, and a powerful art raises to the requisite pitch of splendour:

The other shape
If shape it might be called, that--shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb:
or substance might be called that shadow seemed,
For each seemed either-black it stood as night,
Fierce an ten furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful : what seemed his head
The likeness of kingly Crown had on.

It is these qualities that make the style grand or great: Milton uses Latin words and Latin constructions and inversions; words are carefully selected with reference both to their sence and their sound. He says what he has to say in the

fewest and the best possible words. Similies and metaphors abound. There is also a liberal use of Homoric or longtailed similes, with the result that the impression that is left on our mind after reading his poetry is that of grandeour, majesty and sublimity. As Matthew Arnold says:- In the sure and flamless perfection of his rhythm and diction he is an admirable as Virgil or Dante, and in this respect, he is unique amongst us. None else in English Literature possesses the like distinction"[117] and stopford Brooke praises Milton's style in these words.

"Milton's style is always great, it lifts the low givest life to the common place and dignifies even the vulgar. Equality of power over vast space, imagination, sustained splendour, a majesty which fills it with solemn beauty, belong one and all to Milton's style".[118].

John Belly says:-

"For greatness, the highest sort of greatness, is at the root of the grand style. Grandeur is, indeed, the visible form of the abstract idea of greatness, or perhaps greatness is the matter out of which creats grandeur At any rate, however we define it, the essential quality of Grand style

is greatness, and the point which is attempted to be made here has been that greatness is not the some thing even on beauty or goodness; still less is it the same thing as music of sound, or cleverness, or quickness of fancy, or verbal ingenuity, or any of the other things each of which may be the predominant quality of poetry which is generally and rightly admired. All these things are admirable but they are not the particular thing of which we are in search. That is greatness, not the great sould alone, nor the great subject, but also greatness of art".[119]

Arnold could not give a satisfactory definition of Grand style as noble nature, poetic gift and seriousness in the subject, are the elements of Grand style, because we find these elements in a numbers of poets but we can't regard them a grand style. As John Bailly points out: "Words worth was assuredly a noble nature, poetically gifted, and the subject of we are given is a serious one treated with simplicity yet no one would say the poem was in the Grand style.[120]

The charge of artificiality that is levelled against Milton's style in Paradise Lost is of no value. Inspite of the numerous passages that

are "Thick Inland" with allusions and references and inspite of the elevated and heightend character of its style, the basic structure, of this style has an unmistakable elements of plainness. In the words of oliver Elton "Plain familiar words, in their natural order, from the bedrock of his style.

The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
'Those thoughts that wander through eternity'
Infinite wrath and infinite despair.'

Here, surely, Marlow is the teacher, the unit is the mighty line, self-contained and single-moulded and firmly built on this foundation is the structure brave, the manifold music of Paradise Lost."[121]

Donald R. Pearce, in his essay, the style of Milton's epic and explained the elements of inspassioned prose in Paradise Lost and after quoting a passage of the debates in Hell in Book-II, he has constrasted it with a comparable passage from Shakespeare's troilus and Cressida, According to pearce, while Shakespeares speech is colloquial, it is on the after hand, insufficiently austere for certain things.

"And one of the things I am going to claim

is that the remote grandeur" of Milton's language in Paradise Lost originates in the formalities of classic prose-- a scholastic discipline of thought and word and word-order that deeply pervales the entire poem, inflitrating even the tenderest lyrical passage, to stiffen it as with gold brocade:

"But neither breath of morn, when she ascends
With Charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun
On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit,
flowers,
Nor grateful evening mild, nor silent Night
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by Moon
On glittering starlight, without there is sweet,

The careful graduation of the sence here, the lucidity of statement, the choice economy of diction, the logical word order, the chaste and clear verbal music, all exhibit traditional strength of efficient prose," he has further pointed out in this illuminating essay, prosaic virtue of clarity, order, strict definition, working from line to line, adjusting clause to clause, word to word are the real source of that classic "finish" a clear hardness of texture, which every where distinguishes the Miltonic line from any other."[122]

It is interesting to compare pearce's analysis

of Milton's style with that of Albert Cook, who points out in his essay Milton's abstract music that vagueness and generality are the characteristic qualities of the style of Paradise Lost "A particular poetic force, may be seen to reside with famous Miltonic vagueness, noted perhaps first by Meacaulay and berated by modern critics who value precision highly, Milton gives us not precision but inter-echoing overtones in sound and sence. He does so because in poetic purposes are those not of precision, categorizing the attitudes of sin, rependance, and virtue like Dante, organizisng the gestures of virtue and vice like spenser- but of dgenerality;

> Man's first disobedience and the fruit
> Of that forbideen Tree whose moral taste
> Brought Death in to the world and all our woe.

Here the term "Man" "Fruit" "Tree" etc. are given more generality event than allegory (though Milton allows himself to capitilize them for quasi-allegorical emphasis); allegory impliese whole poetic effort in Paradise Lost is to avoid."[123]

Milton's style is admittedly full of grandeur but it is not altogether lacking in austerity, certain features of Milton's style are too obvious

to be ignored-its sprawling lengthiness, its rhetorical manner, its swelling phrases and its cult of the grandiore but inspite of these elements. There is a very real spirit and power of underlying austerity. Sir Aurobindo thinks that Milton can keep his claim to austerity inspite of his epic fulness.

The solemn and sonorous quality of the verse-music brings out in an abundant measure the grandeur of the style Paradise Lost. He chooses his words for the sake of their sound-effect and since he had a liking for "the resounding alchemy" of Latin words, he introduced them in very large numbers in his epic. There is a punning in the rhythm of his verse, secured by a skilful variation of the pause, a freedom of movement, the apt use of illision and the right time of long and short syllables. The pauses vary in number from one to three. The musical falicity of the following lines from the Book-II, deserves to be noted minutely:

> "If chance the radiant sun, with farewell sweet,
> Extend his evening beam, the field revive,
> The birds their notes renew, and beating herds
> Attest their joy, that hill and vally rings.[124]

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Richardson writes :-

'O' Milton, thou hast employed all they vast treasure of wit learning, and ability, all the beauty, energy, and properiety of words our language was capable, of all the sweetness and harmony of numbers they musical and judicious are furnished the with, all the fire and beauty and sublimity of imagination peculiar to thyself, added to what could be supplied by who have most excelled in the angelical faculty in whatever ages or languages, all the firmness, force and dignity of mind they virtue and piety excited in thee or rewarded thee with".[125]

The criticism of Milton's grand-style in Paradise Lost that it lacks variety and has unredeemed monotony about, is untenable. It has been pointed out by a historian to establish literature that Milton has not only scrupulously avoided monotony from his style but has also taken care to adopt it to the theme of the epic". In his great epic, Milton is extra ordinary fertile in the method he adopts to avoid monotony. He strengthens blank verse without cramping it; he givies it grace without making it vapid, and rounds off with, finished care the single line without ever sacrificing the organic unity of the entire peom. He is like

...

a great organist who, while never losing sight of the original melody, adorns it with every conceivable variation serves to exhibit, in place of obsuring the freshness and sweetness of the simple theme.[126]

The term "grand style" is the fittest to describe the style of Paradise Lost but we cannot ignore that the term should not be regarded on something exclusive in itself. Sir Walter Alexander Raleigh praises Milton's style in these words. "His style is not a simple loose flowing garment, which takes its out line from its natural fall over the figure, but a satin brocade, stiff with gold, exactly fitted to the body"[127]

No doubt Milton is singular in this field. He packs his meaning in to the fewest possible words and studies economy in every trifle. Raleigh again says :-

"His poetry is like the eloquence of the Lord Chancellor Bacon, as described by Ben Johnson:- "No man ever spoke more neatly, more pressly more weightly, or sufered less empitness, less idleness in what he utterd. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could

not cough, or look aside from him, without loss". It is this quality of Milton's verse that makes the exercise of reading it aloud a delight and trial. Every word is of value.[128] John crowe Ransom declared Milton's style a good example of grand style as he says :-

"Of Milton's style in the sence of beauty of sound, emagery, syntax and dytax, idiom, I am quite unprepared to be very analytic. It is grand style: which is to say, I suppose, that it is the grand style, or as much as grand style as English poets have known; the style produced out of the most's rembrance of his classical models, chiefly virgil. Milton has not been the only English poet to learn from virgil, but he is doubtless the one who learned the most. Untill the nineteenth century virgil was perhaps the greatest external influence upon english literature.[129] Walter Savage Londor is also the queue of Milton's admirers. As accarsding to him as far an his style is concerned the noblest specimen in the world of eloquence, harmoney and genius.[130]

The first characteristic of Milton's work that comes to the light in his extremely difficult

nature, and this difficulty is lived in his style. As Mark Pattison says "An appreciation of Milton is the last reward of consumate scholarship."[131]

As a matter of fact, Milton is poet not for the masses, but for the learned few. A whole treasury of allusions and reference to classical myth, to history and literature, to Biblical myathology, and contemporary literatures, lies scattered all over his works. For example, in order to describe the vastness of satan's troops in Paradise Lost, Book-I he brings in the names of the nightest armies known to history and legend. As Hanford remarks "The whole treasury of poetry and the whole store house of learning are at his command. He assumes that they are also at command of his reader and accordingly he loads very rift of his verse with the ore of myth and legend, historical literary and scientific fact, of no other English style is erudition so integral a part, classical and biblical allusions is, of course, the most abundant, constituting a kind of current coin of expression where with to convey a meaning rich inpoetic and cultural suggestion."[132] (Plenty of Allusions and References).

No doubt his poetry is packed with abundance

of Allusions and References which made his style great and grandeur and this grandeur is produced mainly by three things as Prof. C.B. Lewis says, "First the use of slightly unfamiliar words and constructions, including archaism, secound the use of proper names, not solely nor chiefly for their sound, but because they are the names of splendid, remote, terrible, voluptuous, or celebrated thing. They are there to encourage a sweep of the reader's eye over the richness and variety of the world to supply largar author which we breathe as long as the poem last. Third continued allusion to all the source of heightend interest in our sense experience (light, darkness, storm, flowers, jewel, sexual love and the like) but all over topped and "managed" with an air of magnanimous austerity).[133]

(Much brivity and condensation)

As a matter of fact Milton works is further heightend by the extreme condensation and much brivity of his style. As Raleigh Calls "The packed line introduced by Milton is of a great density and conciousness than any thing to be found in English Literature before it. It is our nearest native counter part of the foreceand reserve of

the high virgilian diction:[134]

"He packs his meaning is to the fewest possible words, always upon duty; he is surrounded with sense; it rises in every world and he studies economy in every trifle. A reader of Milton must be attentive to every line, every word is to the purpose. These are no lazy intervals; all has been considered and demands all merit observation. Even in the best writers you sometimes find words and sentences which hang on so loosely, you may blow them off. Milton's are all substance and weight: fewer would not have served his turn, and more would have been superflame. He expresses himself so concisely, employs words so sparingly, that whoever will possess his ideas must dig for them, and often times pretty for below the surface."[135] According to him Mitlon's style as best entitled to the name of the classic.[136]

The carefully jewelled mosaic style was practised very early by Milton. Raleigh quotes a few lines of Nativity ode.

"See how from for pont he eastern road
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:
O run, prevent them with they humble ode
And lay it lowly at this blessed feet.[137]

Connectives and conjunctives are of no value is his style and he discarded all superfluous graces from his tyle and in this way he gives no rest to the reader to move farward. Each word is of value. There is no mortar between the stones, each is held in place by the weight of the other, and helps to uphold the building. He can enclose vast concepts within little space on the following stanza displays.

> "Through many and already vale
> They passed, and many a region dotorous.
> O'ver many a frozen, many a fieny Alp
> Rocks, caves, lakes, fens bogs, dens. and
> shades of death.[138]

And in Paradise Lost, Bool-I the mightiest army one can imagine is rendered in less than six lines :

> "All in a moment through the gloom were seen
> Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
> With orient colours waving: with them rose
> A forest huge of spears: and thronging helms.
> Appeard, and serried sheilds in thick array
> of depth immeasurable.[139]

Import gravity - The construction of his sentences

is not the normal familiar construction of ordinary speech. His constructive aims at maximum of condensation and loftiness. As Raleigh says "You can not guess the adjective from the substantive, nor the end of the phrase from its beginning. He is much given to invoting the natural English order of epithet and noun, that he may gain a greater emphasis for the epithet."[140]

Import force and Effectiveness - Inversion often forces on our attention a specific point which the poet wishes to stress. As for instance the opening lines of Paradise Lost Book-I.

"Of mans first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden Tree, whose moral taste,
Brought Death into the world, and all our woe
With loss of Eden, till one greater man
Restore us, and regain the blessful set,
Sing Heavenly Muse.[141]

Normally the words 'sing Heavenly Muse' should open the poem, but Milton brings the object just in the forefront, and stresses in one breath 'man' first disobedience 'the fruit' the 'forbidden Tree' 'moral taste' These are central to the poem. Then by inverting the normal order, he

is able to focus out attention on the theme, and raise before ourimagination the dramative and historical dimensions of his cosmic stage. As Daiches says- "The violations of the normal English, which have upset some pursuits are carefully and systematically employed in order to achieve different kind of emotional pitch to effect continuity and integration in the wearing of epic design and above all to sustain the as a poem and to keep it from desintegrating into insolated fragments of high rhetoric."[142]

SUGGESTIVENESS :

Suggestiveness is the important quality of Milton's style. His poetry must be read imaginatively. In this connection Rose Macaulay writes ---

"The most unimaginative man must understand Homer. Homer gives him no choice, and requires from his no exertion; but takes the whole upon himself, and sets the images in so clear a light, that it is impossible to be blind to them. The works of Milton can not be comprehended or enjoyed, unless the mind of the reader co-operates with that of the writer. He does not paint a finished picture, or play a mere passive listener. He

sketches and leaves others to fil up the out line. He strikes the keynote and expects his bearerc to make out the melody".[143]

EPIC SIMILES :

This use of Homeric similies help the poet a great deal to secure the co-operation of his readers. His similies are elaborate and learned. As Prof. Raleigh writes.

"From Herodotus to a laus magnus and onward to the latest discoveries in geography, and astronomy, the reaseraches of Galileo and the description given by contemporary travellers of China and to chinese, or of the North American, Indian, Milton compels the authors he had read, both ancient and modern to contribute to the gracing of his work".[144]

VERBAL MUSIC :

Milton chooses words both with reference to their sound and their sence. Many of the proper nouns used by him to have a grand sonorous music. His use of alliteration, assonance, onomotopoeia, repition, etc. are some other devices used by Milton to import music and melody to his diction.

The following lines arises skilful balancing of vowel sounds.

If chance the radiant sun, with forewell sweet,
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their note renews, and bleating herds,
Attest their joy, that hill an valley rings".

<u>LATINIZATION OF MILTON</u> :

Milton's use of Latin words in their originals sense are the key notes of his grandeur and sublimity. Through his Latinism he achieves conciseness as well as that elevation and remoteness that distancy from the speech of every day life. As Johnson writes.

"Our language, say Addison, sunk under him" but the truth is that both in prose and verse he had formed his style by perverse and pedantic principle. He was disirous to use English words with a foreign idiom--- one source of his peculiarity was his familiarity with the Tus can poets: the disposition of his words is, I think frequently Italian: perhapes Sometimes combination with other tongues.[144] This conjecture of Johnson's has been vividly indicated by Prof. F.T. Prince in the Italian Elements in Milton's peotry (1954).

Mr. Prince shows that the source of the blank verse of Paradise Lost in the Italian Blank verse of Tasso's Le Sette Giernate del Mondo Creato (1954) "The seven days of creation as D.J. Lake writes "The subject of Tasso's poem is roughly the same as that of the seventh book of Paradise Lost. Though it uses the grand epic style it is not an epic, it lacks narrative interest, and is, infact, rather a failure. But it is the culmination of a number of 16th century Italian experiments in reproducing the heroic style of virgil in a modern Eroupian language, and it was sufficiently successful in this for Milton to adopt its prosody and diction for his own English epic".[146] He further writes "the Italian influence on Milton is, therefore, not a fundamental one, Tasso merely showed Milton how to imitate virgil rhymed hexameters, and his Latin Syntax"[147]

It would not be wrong if we say that Milton made Italian poets as his model. Though, there was the great example of Shakespeare. When Milton had dredy imitated to some extent in comus.

If we compare the epic Paradise Lost with the blank verse sections of the dramas comus and

Samson Agonistes, we find in the dramas a simpler syntax, and some, liberaties of versification which are absent from the edpic, for example, in Comus we sometimes find lines of eleven syllable instead of the normal ten, the last syllable being stressed.

1. But for that demand magazician, let him be gist (line 602).
2. Bore a bright golden flower, but not in to is soyl (line 633) verse of this kind is not to be formed in Paradise Lost. But it is common in the jacobean dramatist, such as Shakespeare and fletcher. Lake further writes--- "the 16th century Italian copied virgil in his dislocation of words and Milton copied them we may classify his distortion of normal order into.

(I) Invesions - E.C. "Battle proud, (1,43) instead of Proud Battle.

(II) Removals - E.G. "the" upright heart and pure" (1,18) where "pure" has been removed from its normal position among the adjectives in front of the noun (as in the upright, pure heart and placed later "end"[148]

Prof. C.S. Lewis writes "It must also be noticed

that while Milton's Latin construction in one way tighten up our language, in another way they make it more fluid. A fixed order of words is the price an all but ruinous price which englihs pays for being uninflected. The Miltonic construction enable the poet to depart in some degree from this fixed order and thus to drop the idea into his sentence in any order he chooses these for example.

"Soft oppression seised,
My dronsed sense, untroubled though I thought
I then was passing to my formel state
Insensible, and forth with to dissolve (VIII)

The syntax is of artificial that it is ambigous. I do not know whether untroubled qualifies me understood, or sense, and similar doubts arise about inhensible and the contruction of to dissolve.

But then I do not need to know. The sequence drowsed - untroubled my former state insensible dissolve is exactly right, the very crumbling of consciousness is before us and the fring of syntatical mystry helps rather than hinder the effect". Milton's Latin or Italian construction made his language subtle As Mr. D.J. Lake writes.

"We see then that Milton's Latin or Italian synstax is not just an end in itself-normally it is used to achieve more or less subtle effects of sound, emphasis, and the kind of ambiguity that enriches meaning. Milton's use of unenglish vacabulary or idiom may also have more than one motive. Thus to often uses an English word derived directlyor indirectly, fom Latin- in its original Latin. For example, "supplanted" which in 17th centurymeant "dispossessed or caused (metaphorically) to feel is used by Milton in the Latin sense tripped up (liteally).

His Armes Clung to him Ribs, his leggs intwing.
Each other till supplanted down he fell.(X512-3)

But Milton is not being merely pedantic. Satan has just metaphorically sapplanted, man is paradise, so now god supplants 'him physically as a taken of his power to supplantor over throw him metapherically whenever he chooses. Milton intends both meaning of the word Latin and English, to befelt at once- and this is probably ture in all such case. The effect is once more a richness of suggestion."[150]

Milton's use of alliteration creats subtlety as D.J. Lake says "But Milton's sound effect are

not usually so obvious. When he uses alliteation. It is often to produce subtle connection of sense between the alliterating words. Thus in the first three lines of Paradise Lost we have:

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden Tree whose mortal taste
Brought Death into the world, and all over woo--

The repeated letters suggest that the first fruit was forbidden, that disobedience causes Death, that the Taste of the tree made a world of woe, and that man is now Mortal"[151]. But Tillyard has different view.

"There is not the slightest need to insest on a latinization. Even if Milton coined the phrase to live to yourself, it is a good English coinage and Justifiable on the analogy of keeping to yourself. Another mistake is to see a latinization inevery absolute participal clause Milton wrote. When Shakespeare writes.

Good poter, turn the key,
All cruels else subscribed.

It is not usual to insist that in the last phrase he was deliverately imataing the Latin ablative absolute, nor is the phrase. 'One man gone, another

takes his place, usually considered latinized English; nor again do stock holders explain of ablative absolutes or destorted English when they receive dividents' Income take decuted why then insist that Milton is latinized when he uses such phases? It you are intention on finding latimism in Shakespeare, you will meet with wide success. Take for instance, the line.

As files to want on boy's are we to the Gods."[152] He goes on to the extent of saying that the main peculiarities or heightening of Milton's style is Paradise Lost are quite unlatin, indeed quite alien to the genius of the Latin tongue.[153]

As Mr. Empson remarks on the vague or appearently disorded grammar of Milton's poetry he says.

"The chief reason for it is that Milton aims both at a compact and weighty style, which needs short clauses, and asustand style with the weight of momentum, which requires long causes.[154]

Walten Raleigh has pointed out how Milton used many Latin word's in a double sense, "To the odinay intellegence they convey one meaning

to a scholar's memory they suggest also another, it became the habit of Milton to make use of both values, to assess his words in both capacities, any page of his work furnishes, example of his delicte care for the original meaning of Latin words".[155]

Thus the quaint expression sounding alchemy is used for trumpets of brass, Landskip' for landscape, 'highth' for height, and 'strucken' sublime is constantly used by him in the Latin sense of a loft or in the air sovran, is used instead of soverignty and author is used in the Latin sense of 'informent' many of his Eligions and constructions also result from his passion for conciseness.

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SUBLIMITY IN MILTON'S POETRY

"SUBLIMITY IN MILTON'S POETRY'

As a matter of fact Milton is the second great poet of England. He is known as next to Shakespeare. The supreme quality of his poetry is its sublimity. The lements of sublimity in his poetry were noted early in the eighteenth century though it has considerate difference about what really constituted sublimity. Dr. Johnson who made a severe attack on Milton's poetry and no doubt he gave no place to Milton in English poetry but he admitted the elements of sublimity found in Milton's poetry. He remarks in these words:

"The characteristic quality of his poem is sublimity. He sometimes descends to the legant, but his element is the great. He can occasionally invest himself with grace; but his natural part is gigantic loftiness. He can please when plasure is required; but it is his peculiar power to astonish"[1].

He further says:

"Sublimity is the general and prevailing quality in this poem; Sublimity variously modified, sometime descriptive, sometimes argumentative"[2].

Pattisan has rightly said that Milton does not refute opponents, but curses enemies. Yet his rage, even when most delivious, is always a Miltonic rage. It

is grand, sublime, terrible.[3]

Addison dwelt on the elements of sublimity in Paradise Lost in his "spectator" in these words:

"Milton's chief talent, and indeed, his distinquishing excellence lies in the sublimity of his thoughts. There are others of the moderns who rival him in every other part of poetry; but in the greatness of his sentiments he triumphs over all the poets both modern and ancient. Homer only excepted. It is empossible for the idmagination of man to distend itself with greater ideas than those which he has laid together in his first, second and sixth books. The seventh which describes the creation of the world, is likewise wonderfully sublime, though not so apt to stir up emotion in the mind of the reader nor consequently so sperfect in the epic way of writing because it is filled with less action. Let the judicious reader compare what Longinus has observed on several passages in Homer and he will find parallels for most of them in the Paradise Lost."[4]

Addison referred to the sublimity of Paradise Lost in regard to its theme but his observations about the language and style of the heroic poem hold good for Paradise Lost also. "It is requisite that the language of an heroic poem should be both perspicuous and

sublime. In proportion as either of the two qualities are wanting, the language is imperfect"[5].

He has explained that in the quest for sublimity "A poet should take particular care to guard himself against idomatic ways of speaking"[6].

He further says:

"It is not, therefore, sufficient that the language of an opic poem be perspicuous, unless it be also sublime. To this end it ought to devitate from the common forms and ordinary phases of speech. The judgement of a poet very much discovers itself shunming the common roads of expression.Without failing into such ways of speech as may seem stiff and unnatural"[7].

Milton's poetry elevates and uplifts us. He lived a life of purity and austerity, and undoubtedly his poetry bears the unmistakable stamp of the nobility of his character. He had a high conception of his calling and prepared himself painstakingly for it. All that comes out from his pen characterised by dignity, and stateliness. His poetry exercises an elevating influence on the mind of the reader. It gives us an impression of moral exaltation. "An appreciation of Milton, said Mark Pattison" is the last reward of consumate scholarship"[8]. He is not a poet not for the masses, but for the learned few. He is not for one age

but for all the future ages.

Sublimity in poetry arises when noble thoughts find a noble expression. Milton's subject matter as well as his treatment of it is equally noble. Voltaire is of the opinion that Milton's poetry is the greatest thing in the English language. He lived in the company of the great writers of ancient Greece and Rome and the great Christian teachers and Saints, and so he could never come down to the cheap love poetry which had been in vogue ever since the Renaissance. Not lovers and lasses, but God, Satan, Adam, Eve and Christ are the characters that Milton introduces in his poetry"[9]. In comus, the poet presents sublime thoughts virtues and chastity. In Paradise Lost, he represents the struggle between Good and Evil and the ultimate victory of the Good. Paradise Regained is an expression of the sublime thoughts and ideas of Milton concerning God and Religion. He was a noble soul with a high conception of his callings and this personal loftiness imparts loftiness to all that he writes. All his life he lived in the company of the loftient minds and imbided their ideas. His poetry is an expression of his noble soul, poetically inspired, and hence it could not but be lofty. As Dr. Johnson rightly pointed out "His natural past is gigantic loftiness"[10] for want of a better word

his style has been called 'Miltonic' a thing apart in English literature. Loftiness of thought and majestic of expression combine to make Milton's style, sublime, in the real sense of the word.

Coleridge sings the praise of Milton's poertry and regards sublimity as a base of his poetry in these words "Sublimity is the pre-eminent characterestic of the Paradise Lost. It is not an arithmetical sublime like klopstock's whose rule always is to treat what we might think large as contemptibly small. Klopstock mistake bigness for greatness. There is a greatness arising from images of effort and daring, and also from those of moral endurance. In milton both are united. The fallen angels are human passion, invested with a dramatic reality"[11]. He further says :

"In the paradise Lost the sublimest parts are the ravelation of Milton's own mind, producing itself and evolving its own greatness; and this is so truly so, that when that which is merely entertaining for its objective beauty is introduced, it at first seems a discord"[12]. Colridge noted that Milton has thrown around Satan a singularity of daring, a grandeur of sufference, and a ruind splendour which constitute the very height of poetic sublimity.

sublimity in Milton's poetry in these words :

"His poetry becomes a sublime embodiment of will and passion, an expression of the grandeur of soul which elevated him above the pettiness of his human environment and made his stand firm against the shock of circumstances. For Shelly and Byron he is the type of the free personality, a hero in the warfare against the tyranny of law. It is thus that Shelly opostrophizes him in Adonais.

He died
Who was the fire of an immortal strain,
Blind,old and lonely, when his country's pride --
And Byron is the Dedication to Don Jaun

If, fallen in evil days on evil tongues
Milton appealed to the Avenger Time
If time, the Avenger-exercrates his wrongs
And makes the word "Miltonic" mean "Sublime".-

The "Sublimity" of Milton thus becomes a personal quality sublimity of soul"[13].

"Wordsworth takes a saner view of Milton's personality. He has little to say of his rebellion, much of his stern righteousness and uncompromising idealism. To him the "Sublimity" of Milton's is a sublimity of character and spiritual insight, not one of passion and will. He invokes the poets enfluence

against the selfishness and bare materialism of the times, crying, as every age has done and will do.

Milton thou shouldst be living at this hour"14

Grierson remarks:

"Sublimity is the echo of a great soul" it is this perfection of his own soul in the style and verse that makes criticism of faults seems idle" the dignity, the sanity - - the just subordination of detail, the due adoptation of means to ends, the high respect of the craftsman for his craft and for himself, which in noble virgil and the great Greeks, are all to be found in Milton, and now where else in English Literature are they all to be found"[15]

Grierson remarks about this supreme stroke of Milton's poetic imagination "is there even in Shakespeare a greater moment and Shakespeare might have marred it by a touch of bombast or wit"[16].

The description of devils going to Pandomonium and preparing themselves, or the great debate in Hell is also an example of sublimity. In the midst of the dramatic and picturesque scene comes a passage of pure poetry, a poetry which is the words of Grierson, makes one forget the story, spell bound by the loveliness of the lines:

To Highth of noblest temper Heroes old
Arming to battle, and instead of rage
Deliberate valour breathed, firm and un-moved
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat,
Nor wanting power so mitigate and swage
With solemn touches, troubled thoughts and chase
Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pains
From mortal or immortal minds[17].

Among the many sublime strokes or touches of Milton in the second book of Paradise Lost mention can be made only of a few, the debate among the fallen angles, and of the angels engaged in philosophic discourse:

of Providence, fore-knowledge, will and fate
fist fate, free will, fore knowledge absolute,
And found not end in wondering mazes lost.[18]

Satan's heroic choice of the exploration of the Hell and Chaos and his encounter with sin and death:

On the other side
Incents it with indignation Satan stood
Unterrified and like a Comet burned
That fires the length of orphius huge.[19]
In the Artick sky, and from his horned hair
Shakes pestilence and war.[20]

Love of beauty is another characteristic of Milton's poetry which contributes to its sublimity. Infact he was profoundly sensitive to the beauties of external nature. He depicts the beauties of the country side in L Allegro. The picture of nature that he presents in this early poem is extremely beautiful and charming. The poet watches the beauty of the sun, the clouds, the russet lawns and the trees standing in their beauty and grandeur. In II Penseroso, he paints many exquistie landscape for our delight. In Paradise Lost his sense of beauty is supreme.

Stateliness and Magestic themes increase and stress the sbulimity of Milton's poetry. Majesty is the quality that Milton imparted to English poetry. English poetry between Shakespeare and Milton had man graces, but the quality of stateliness was imparted to it by Milton. The poet never stoops down at any stage nor does he agree to be on a lower plane, just to satisfy the tastes of the lower sections of the reading public. MIlton is always stately, majestic and grand. The subject that he chooses for his composition are stately and treatment that he gives to them, is equally stately and dignified. Common objects and low, petty themes do not form the subject matter of his poetry. As he dwelt apart, his themes are far removed from the

eternal interest and his genius find full scope in dealing with grand themes. The problem of the fall of man and originaal sin, the redemption of humanity by Christ, and the justification of the ways of God to man, such are the themes of Milton. Milton was satisfied that the vocation of the poet is lofty and exalted, and to keep up the dignity of his vocation, he writes poetry of great sublimity and beauty of the highest perfection. The artistic sincerity of the poet is seen everywhere. We know how painstakingly he prepared himself for his profession. Every word is carefully chosen-both with reference to its sense and sound-and everything superfluous is rigidly excluded. He says what he has to say in the best and the fewest words possible. He writes as a conscientious artist and whatever he has left behind bears the hall-mark of artistic perfection. As John Baily writes "Poetry has been for our greatest artistic achievement and he is by far our greatest poetic artist."[21]

Milton's imagination is all comprehensive in its sweep. Only a man of Milton's imagination could have shaped the Paradise Lost. The imagination of the poet moves from heaven to hell, through the intervening chaos, and this could only have been possible with the superb imagination that he has. He has an imagination

that can soar above time and space and be at home in infinity. In the first four books Milton poetic imagination has been untrammelled by Biblical or Ecclesiontical tradition and specially the first two books are full of great things. In the first two books one stroke of creative and surprizing genius follows another-Satan and the angels prostrate on the floor of hell, Satan's dialogue with Beelzebub, his progress across the burning marle:

> "The torrid clime
> Smote on his sore beside, vaulted with fire
> Nathless he so endured."

The rousing of the angels and this tremendous stroke that reveals the essential greatness of Satan's character "inspite of his commitment to evil" Satan shaken with remors:

> "Thrice he assayed and thrice inspite of scorn
> Tears such as angles week burst forth; at last
> words intermove with sighs found out their way"[22].

Religious fervour according to Albert-Puritanium is the characteristic of Milton's sublimity. His religious fervour was unshaken. Even his enemies did not deny his sincerity. It is seen even in one of his

earliest sonnets :

> All is, if I have grace to use it so,
> as ever in my great Taskmaster's eye.[23]

It persists upto the end, growing deeper and more intense by the time of Samson Agonistes. In Paradise Lost and Samson Agonistes his chief motive is to "justify the ways of God to men". This religious tendency is apparent in (1) the choice of religious subjects, especially in the later poems. (2) the sence of responsibility and moral exalation. (3) the fondness for preaching and lecturing, which in Paradise Lost is a positive weekness. (4) the inferiority of women and in his scorn for the miscellaneous rabble.

Classicism is the chief characteristic of his poetry. He was a classical poet. As Albert says "Curiously inter-wrought with the seventy of his religious nature is a strong bent for the classics which is pagan and sensuous."

His learning was wide and mature; he wrote Latin prose and verse as freely as he wrote English. His classical bent is apparent in (1) his choice of classical and semi-classical forms-the epic, the classical tragedy, the pastoral and the sonnet (2) the elaborate description and Homoric similes in Paradise Lost. (3) The fondness for classical allusions with

which his poetry is heavily burdened-he is the most learned of English poets-and in (4) the dignity of his styele, in his precision and care in the selection and use of words, and his fondness for Latin construction and words " In his choice of diction we have the classical element abundantly apparent and lastly, the same element appears in the typical Miltonic grandeur and frigidity. The arrogant aloofness from men and mortals.[24]

In his sublimity, Milton is more akin to the ancient poets, in whose works we find grace, majesty and simplicity, though he surpasses them also in these characteristics. In Paradise Lost, Milton has brought a fine fusion of sublime thought and sublime expression or the grand style. As Andrew Marwell in his poem, writes about Milton:

"That Majesty which through thy work doth reign
Draws the devout, deterring the profane,
And things divine thou treatst of in such state
As them prserves and thee, inviolate,
At one delight and sorrow on us seize,
Thouh singst with so nuch gravity and ease,
And above human flight dost soar deft
With plume so strong, so equal and so soft
The bird named from that paradise you sing

So never flags, but always keeps on wing[25]

And he further writes:

"I too transported by the Mode offend
and while I meant to Praise thee must commend
Thy vrse created like thy theme sublime,
In Number, weight and Measure-needs not Rime"[26]

Dryden also considered Milton on the most sublime and majestic of all poets. So he wrote in his Epigram on Milton

"Three poets, in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy and England did adorn,
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed,
The next in majesty, in both the last :
To make a third, she joined the former two"[27]

Pattison says:

Dryden praised paradise lost, he knew
not half the extents of its excellence-28

Milton genius needed the most sublime theme for its adequate expression. Each of his major poems has a sublime theme. Samson Agonistes, Comus, Paradise Regained and above all Paradise Lost have all distinctly sublime themes. The theme of Paradise Lost is the most extensive, the most universal and consequently most sublime theme ever chosen by any poet

in any language. Commenting on the universality and sublimity of Milton's theme in Paradise Lost, Dr. Johnson observes "He has envolved in his account of the fall of Man the events which preceded, and those that were to follow it; he has inter-woven the whole system of Thelogy with such properity that every part appears to be necessary"[29]

Dr. Johnson further says "His subject is the fate of world the revolutions of heaven and earth; rebellions against the supreme kings, raised by the highest order created beings ; the over throw their host, and the punishment of their crime; the creation of a new race of reasonable creatures ; their original happiness and innocence, their forfieture of immortality, and their restoration of hope and peace"[30]

No other poet in any language has attempted to write on epic on such a vast and grand subject; as Jonathan Recharelson observes ; --

"Whatever Milton has woven into his poem of others, still his sublimest passages are more so than could enter the heart of orpheus. He said, Homer, Callimachess etc. Such as the Heathen world were incapable of by infinite degree, such as none but the

noblest genius could attain to and that assisted by a religion revealed by God himself. We have then in Paradise Lost a collection the quintessence of all that is excellent in writing frequently improved and explained better than by the best of their professed commentators, but never based; and a sublimity which all other writings put together have not. To complete all, he has made use of all these, so as to be subservient to the great end of poetry, which is to please and enrich the imagination and to mend the heart and make the man happy"[31] Dr. Johnson asserted the same point thus :

"He considered creation in its whole extent, and his descriptions are, therefore, learned. He had accustomed his imagination to un-restrained indulgence,and his conception, therefore, were extensive. The characteristic quality of his poem is sublimity. He some times descends to the legant, but his element is the great. He can occasionally invest himself with grace; but his natural part is gigantic lostiness. He can please when pleasure is required: but it is his peculiar power to astonish."[32] So before the greatness displayed in Milton's Paradise Lost, all other greatness shrinks away.

Milton's thoughts and sentiments are equally

sublime. Paradise Lost is the quintessence of all philosophy, mtaphysics, Cosmology, religion and theology. Here is a full display of the united force of study and genius of a great accumulation of materials, with judgement to digest, and fancy to combines them. Milton was able to select from nature, or from story, from ancient fable, or from modern science, whatever could illustrate or adorn his thoughts. An accumulation of knowledge impregnated his mind, fermented by study, and exalted by imagination.

In the last, it is not futile to quote the words of Pattison for Milton's sublimity that he says "The name of Milton is a Synonym for sublimity"[33].

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BLANK VERSE IN MILTON'S POETRY

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Tennyson rightly observes :

"O Mighty Mouthed Inventor of harmonies,
O skilled to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted Organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages"[1]

As a matter of fact Milton was the first poet who adopted blank verse in non-dramatic poetry and gave it the shape of perfection. He made it the measure of epic and narrative poetry. He did not agree with the view of Dryden that "Blank verse should be chiefly employed for the higher or more colloquial purposes of comedy".[2] Milton struck an original line when in defiance of the judgement of Dryden he chose the blank verse as the measure of narrative and Heroic poetry. He was the first poet who liberated heroic poetry "from the troublesome and modern bondage to rhyming".[2] He handled the blank verse by his own ingenuity for nowhere else blank verse had been used for Heroic and narrative poetry. Blank verse had been dexterously employed by Marlow and Shakespeare in Drama, but no poet had used it for epic and heroic Poetry. Truly, as Raleigh says "Milton left a high road behind him alon which many a tuneful pauper has since limped, but before him

he found nothing but the jungle and false fires."[2]

He said in his preface that his use of blank verse is "an example set, the first in English of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem."[5]

Milton looked to the Elizabethan poets and dramatist for the use of the blank verse. Surrey has used blank verse in the translation of the Aneid. Marlow had used it in all his plays. But Milton noticed that the Blank verse is Popular vogue had degenerated and could not be employed in its decadent form in Heroic poetry. The Elizabethan dramatists after Shakespeare used too many liberties so that blank verse tended to become conversational and had almost lost its heroic colour. It had become loose and was fast degenerating into rhythmical prose. Milton had to safeguard against all these pitfalls. Raleigh writes "To us blank verse seems the natural metre for a long serious poem. Before Milton's day, except in the drama, it had only once been so employed in an Elizabethan poem of no mark or likelihood, called- A tale of two swanners. While Milton was writing Paradise Lost, the critics of his time were discussing whether the rhymed couplet or some form of stanza was fitter for

a narrative poetry, and whether the couplet or blank verse better suited the needs of drama. As no one before Milton, had maintained in argument that blank verse was the best English measure for narrative poetry dealing with lofty themes, as no critic had even been at the pains to refute that opinions."[6] Raleigh again says "He learned his blank verse from the dramatist, But his tendencies and ambitions were not dramatic, so he escaped the deseases that aflicted the drama in its decadence."[7] His blank verse has been highly appreciated and applauded for its perfection. Lander is of the opinion that Milton's blank verse is "the noblest specimen in the word of eloquence, harmony and genius."[8] Mathew Arnold thinks that his blank verse in the "sure and flawless perfection of his rhythm and diction he is an admirable as Virgil or Dante, and in this respect he is unique amongst us. No one else in English literature and art possesses the like distinction."[9]

(BLANK VERSE SUITABLE FOR THE ELEVATED THEME).

Milton had given considerable thought to the art of verification and he cultivated the various verse-forms from his Horton days to the composition from Paradise Lost. He attained mastery in different verse-forms such as the ode, the

lyric, the elegy the sonnet and the epic. He used the stanza form in "Ode on nativity" and the octo-syllabic couplet in L-Allegero and II Penseroso. These poems reveal his superb handling of rhymed verse. Milton chose blank verse for Paradise Lost and after that for Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes also becuase he felt that blank verse alone was capable of expressing the high and elevated thoughts and the description of grand and mighty scenes and situations in the epic. In the words of Saintsbury "His spacious description, his fiery and energetic narrative could not, like the meandering tapestry work of spencer or the cloud and sky pageantry of Shelly, have endured a regular confinement even in such comparatively roomy bounds as those of the spenserian much less in any smaller stanza. The couplet would have perpetually teased and cramped him. He needed and he achieved the large and infinity varied freedom of the verse paragraph which only blank verse allows, and which he himself could puncture and vary in cadence till it acquires almost the beauty and the proportion of the stanza itself."[10] When some criticism was made on the Milton's choice of blank verse as his medium and he had to put forward a vigorous defence of his choice "The

measure in English Heroic verse without Rime, as that of Homer in Greek and Virgil in Latin Rime being no necessary Adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially but the invention of a barbarous good age, to set off wretched matter and lame Meter. Grac't indeed since by the use of some famous modern poets, carried away by custom but much to their own vexation, hindrance and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than else they would have express them."[11]

(Un-rhymed Iambic pentametre: the standard verse)

The standard of Milton's verse in Paradise Lost and paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes may be taken as the line of ten syllables and five accents in rising rhythm i.e. (iambic pentametre unrhymed).

> Torment him; round the throws his baleful eyes
>
> or better yet.[12]

United though and counsels, equal hope.[13]

As a matter of fact, lines with such even and regular iambic beat are comparatively sore-rarer in Milton's verse than in most English iambic penta-metre. Yet probably a majority of lines even in Milton's poems approximately it so closely

that we are unconscious of a variation.

Thus is the line :

"of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste".[14]

Most reader would emphasise the second syllable only slightly less than the succeeding ones which bear the metrical account and in the line :

"The force of those dire Arms? Yet not for those".[15] Though the word 'dire' is nearly equivalent in weight to 'arms' it does not disturb to any marked way the regularity of beat.

VARIETY IN MILTON'S BLANK VERSE

Releigh remarks :

"In a long and narrative poem variety is indispensable and Milton preserved the highest freedom in some respects".[16] When we read simply Paradise Lost it appears that its blank verse is lacking variety, but if we read it a loud and carefully we will observe that Milton introduces variety into his blank verse by the placing of caesura in a continually varied manner. Again he says "He continually varied the stress in the line, their number, their weight and their endidence, letting them face, where it pleased his ear, on the odd as well as on the even syllables of the line."[17] He extended the song of the Pause beyond

what is usual in the rhyming couplet, falling any where from the second syllable to the ninth.

Releigh further more points out that "His chief study, it will be found, is to vary the line. No other metre allows of anything like the variety of blank verse in this regard, and no other meterist makes so splendid a use of its freedom. He never forgets the pattern yet he never stoops to teach it by the repetition of monotonous tattoo. Hence there are perhaps a fewer one line quatation to be found in the works of Milton than in the works of any other master of blank-verse".[18]

The following iambic pentametre lines from Paradise Lost show how interestingly varied Milton placing of the caesura can be:

> Nine times the space that measures day and night
> To mortal one, be with horrid crew
> Lay vanquished rolling in the fiery gulf,
> Confounded though immortal. But his doom,
> Reserved him to move wrath; for now the thought
> Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
> Torments him: sound he throws his beleful eyes
> That witnessed huge affliction and dismay
> Mixed with obdurate pride and stead fart late"[19]

Dougles Bush has charted the opening lines of Paradise Lost by means of the marks for stressed and unstressed syllables to indicate the infinite variety of stress and tempo. He says "Milton's poetic and critical heritage and his own purpose prescribed a long poem, and in a long poem the reader must be made to feel the continuity the enormous onward pressure of the great stream on which he is embarked"[20].

Douglas praises Milton's blank verse in these words:

"The use of blank verse for an heroic poem was a great innovation, and Milton's handling of it added, not a new province but a new world to English prosody."[21] Douglas was much impressed by the variety of style when he made a comprehensive study of Milton's work from the beginning to Samson. He expresses his opinion in this respect in the following words :

"To survey Milton's work from the beginning to Samson is to be impressed by both the uniformity and the variety of style. Always sensitively aware of critical theory and poetic practice, he was a disciple of Ovid, of the Elizabethan's, of Johnson and in those early stages he showed himself a more than and independent master of his craft."[22] Again he says "the word Miltonic

commonly applied to Paradise Lost or to the three major works of the poet's last phase, really includes three very different styles and within Paradise Lost itself there are large variations".[23]

In general Milton compells a reading much more rapid than most blank verse allows. As Mr. Eliot, a master of expressive rhythm has said Milton's verse is never monotonous" its strength and indicate refinements every reader must experience for himself"[24].

David Daiches has pointed out that there are various elements in Milton's blank verse and these have carefully and systematically employed in order to achieve different kinds of emotional pitch. Thus Milton made the fullest use of the freedom afforded by the blank verse. No other metre allows of such variety as the blank verse, and Milton made the fullest use of that freedom of variety granted by the blank verse.

THE MUSIC OF BLANK VERSE

Milton's blank verse is highly musical. Its musical quality is something irresistible and it can be felt best by a proper recitation of the lines. No doubt, Milton is a musical poet

and he got the gift of music from his father. His father was "great a musician".[25] As he was blind, Milton depended not on visual effects but on auditory effects. His poems are full of music and cadence. He was the lover of music from his childhood as Albert writes : Milton's next few years were those of sequestered man of letters. Poetry, Mathematics and music were his main studies."[26] David Daiches remarks :

"The music of the spheres (a favourite notion of Milton) assails their ears and the glittering ranks of angels, guarding the divine order of the Universe of which the musical harmony is the audible symbol, appear to their sight. With the picture of the divine music ringing out, the poem rises to its highest point ("Ring out Ye crystal spheres") before gradually dying away to its close."[27]

When we read Paradise Lost we find that poet sweeps us along and nowhere allows us to settle down and luxuriate on any one line or paragraph. It is organ music. It is sonorous and majestic and on occasions it has that quality which lift us out of ourselves. Guest says "in the flow of his rhythm in the quantity of his

letter-sounds, in the disposition of his pauses, his verse almost fits, the subject, so that the reader may some times doubt whether it be the thought itself or merely the happiness of its expression, which is the source of a gratification so deeply felt."[28]

Milton's expression and the melody of verse are always enchanting. But Dr. Johnson could not find any music in Milton's blank verse, and he thought that Milton's blank verse was harsh and inequal. As he made a severe attack on Milton's blank verse in these words :

One of the poems on which much praise has been bestowed is Lycidas of which the diction is harsh, the rhymes uncertain and the numbers unpleasing."[29]

On comus he says "the songs are vigorous and full of imagary but they are harsh in their diction, and not very musical in their numbers."[30] Dr. Johnson who had modelled his idias of verification on the regular sing-song of Pope, condemns the Paradise Lost as harsh and unequal."[31] But William Hazlitt has refuted all these charges of Dr. Johnson and has admired the note of music

found in Milton's blank verse in the language except Shakespeare's that deserves the name of verse[32] and he regards. Milton a musical poet.[32]

Hazlitt made the following apt observation "I shall not pretend to say that this is not some times the case; for where a degree of excellence beyond the mechanical rules of art is attempted the poet must some times fail. But I imagine that there are more perfect examples in Milton of Musical expression, or of an adoptation of the sound and movement of the verse to the meaning of the passage than in all our others writers whether of rhyme or blank verse, put together (with the exception already mentioned). Spenser is the most harmonious of our stanza writers and Dryden is the most sounding varied of our rhymist. But in neither is there any thing like the same ear for music, the same power of approximating the varieties of poetical to those of musical rhythm, as there is in our great epic poet. The sound of his lines is moulded into the expression of the sentiment, almost of the very image. They rise and fall, pause or hurry rapidly on, with exquisite art, but without the least trick or affectation, as the occasion seems to require."[34]

Walter Savage Landore also felt the charm of the magnificence and musical quality of Milton's verse. Hazlitt, who thought that Milton is the greatest musical poet after Shakespeare. Landor is of the opinion that Milton surpassed Shakespeare in the musical quality of verse. Landor thought Milton's poetry even more musical that of Homer as he remarks.

"My ear, I confess it, is dissatisfied with every thing, for days and weeks, after the harmony of Paradise Lost, leaving this magnificent temple. I am harldy to be pacified by the fairy-built chambers, the rich cup-boards of embossed plate, and the omnigenous images of Shakespeare. After I have been reading the Paradise Lost, I can take up no other poet with satisfaction. I seem to have left the music of Handel for the music of the streets, or at best for drums and fifes. Although in Shakespeare there are occasional burst of harmony no less sublime. Yet if there were many such in continuation, it would be hurtful, not only in comedy, but also in tragedy--. In our English heroic verse such as Milton has composed it, there is a much greater variety of feet, of movement, of musical note and bars, than in the Greek heroic and the final sounds are in comparably

more diversified. My predilection in youth was on the side of Homer; for I had read the Illied twice, and the odyssy once, before the Paradise Lost. Averse as I am to everything relating to theology and especially to the view of it thrown open by this poem, I recur to it incessantly as the noblest specimen in the world of eloquence, harmony, and genius.[35] Milton is the greatest artist and the architect in blank verse. The grandeur of his versification-its richness, melody and rhythmical flow-cannot fail to strike even an ordinary reader. In richness and variety of versification his blank verse stands unrivalled. As Raleigh says: "He left a high road behind him along which many a tuneful pauper has since limped; but before him he found nothing but the single and false fires."[36] He further more says :

"At the time when blank verse was yielding to decay, Milton took it up, and used it neither for conversational nor for rhetorical purposes. In the intrests of pure poetry and melody he lightened its joints, stiffened its texture and one by one gave up almost all the licenses that the dramatists had used."[37] He find musical quality in abundance in Milton's poetry. As he says: "The laws of music in verse are very subtle, and it must be added very imperfectly ascertained,

so that those who dogmatise on them generally and slipping into fantasy or pedentry. How carefully and incessantly Milton adjusted the sound to the sense is known to every reader of Paradise Lost. The dullest ear is caught by the contrast between the opening of the gates of Heaven:

Heaven opened wide
Her ever-dusing gate-harmonius sound
On golden rings moving."[38]

and further more he writes :

"By his deliberate attention to the elements of verbal melody Milton gave a new character to English blank verse."[39] An American critic observes "Milton is a consummate master of English blank verse-gifted in its varied movement and the placing of pauses, majestic in its flowing cadence, stern in its beauty lofty in its tone, incomparable in its dignity."[40] Tennyson rightly calls Milton "The mighty-mouthed inventer of harmonies-God gifted organ voice of England.[41]

The following are some of the finest instances which indicate the music of blank verse in his poetry:

"His hand was known

In Heaven by many a towered structured high
Nor was his name unheard or unadorned
In ancient Greece, and in the Ausonian land
Mân called him Mulciber: and how he fell
From Heaven, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer over the chrystal battlements, from morn
To noon he felt, from noon to dowsy eve,
A summer's day: and with the setting sun
Dropt from the Zenith like a falling star
On lemnos, the Aegean isle: thus they relate,
Erring - - - - - - - - - - "[42]
Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of Night's extended shade) from the eastern point.
Of Libra to the Fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond the horizon; then from Pole to Pole
Hė views in breath, and without longer pause
Down right into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars that shore
Stars distant, but high hand seemed other worlds;
or other worlds they seemed or happy isles."[43]

Milton has himself given us the theory of his verification :

Such on the meeting soul may pierce

In notes with many a winding bout
of linked sweetness long drawn out.[44]

Johnson who is detractor of Milton's poetry praises Milton's musical quality, found in the Paradise Lost in these words:-

"The music of the English heroic lines strikes the ear so fairly that it is easily lost, unless all the syllables of every line co-operate together, this co-operation can only be obtained by the preservation of every verse unmingled with another on a distinct system of sound; and this distinctness is obtained and presented by the artifice of rhyme. The variety of pauses, so much boasted by the lovers of blank verse, change the measure of an English Poet to the periods of a declaimer, and there are only a few skilful and happy reader of Milton, who enable their audience to precieve where the lines end or begin. Blank verse, said an ingenious critic, seems to be verse only to the eye."[45]

Masson says :

"Milton, in the act of writing or mentally composing his poetry, did not generally think of the minutiate of the verse mechanism, but obeyed

the mood of his thought and the instinct of a musical ear as perfect and fastidious as was ever given to man."[46]

Jonathan Richardson remarks :-

"Verse and prose have each their peculiar music, and whether one or the other. It is different according to the subject. All kinds of verses have sounds of their own; blank verse comes nearest to prose, and as the prose of some writers approaches verse, Milton's blank verse, that of Paradise Lost, has the beauty of both: it has the sweetness of measure, without stopping the voice at the end of the line, or any where else but as the sense requires, one verse runs into another and the period concludes in any part of a line indifferently, and as if it was his choice it is very often not at the end of one or of a couplet, as is too frequent with those who write in rhyme. He has frequently driven syllables in a verse, but it is surely fo unless those are no more in quantity than this ten of another."[47]

MUSIC

Music is a characteristic of his diction as well as verification. Words are carefully chosen with reference to their sound. He uses

long catalogues of sonorous and melodius proper names. Often a proper name is modified or contracted to make is more musical. Alliteration and assonance are constantly used with this end in view. Battering-engine, and beat 'Pennous' and plumb downs, vast vacuity, and clould chair are all examples picked up at randem from Paradise Lost. Thus repetition is another musical device frequently used by Milton. Thus the repetition of 'Sweet' in the following line:

"Sweet is the breath of morning, her rising sweet"[48] creates a music all its own, as well as serves to empress the sweetness of Eves idyllic life.

Many of Milton's Latini.ms also result from Milton's ear for sweet Soundings sonorous words. This resounding alchemy is used for its sonorousness instead of the ordinary trumpets of brass. The figure called onomatepacia in which the sound of words echoes their sense, is also used for the same reason. The following are good examples of Milton's use of onamatopoia as well as of his exploitation of vowel-music of the use of monosyllasic words :

1. Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, hogs, dens and shades of death.

2. Over bog, or steep, through strait or rough, dense or rare. In short, Milton is an inspired metrical artist who uses his chosen verse-form as a master, with perfect ease and command, subordinating it to the effects he wants to create. By his use he demonstrated the possibilities of blank verse for poetry and in this field none has ever excelled or even equalled him, just a none has ever equalled Shakespeare in the use of blank verse for dramatic purposes. Milton's unique in the sure and flawless perfection of his diction and verification.

USE OF EXTRA SYLLABLES

Sometimes, we get an extra syllabus at the end of a line as in the following :

'Cornice or friege with bossy sculptures graven

In this line the extra syllable is 'en' sometimes this extra syllables are inserted not at the end, but some where inside the line. At other times, he makes use of an anaebert (a foot of the unaccounted syllables followed by a third counted syllable) as in the following form Book II.

As at the olympian games or phythian games, the verse of Samson Agonistes has been criticised

as harsh because there is an over-abundance of extra syllables at the end of a line. Every six line has an extra syllable in this dramatic poem.

VERSE PARAGRAPH

The verse paragraph of Milton's poetry has been highly applauded by many critics: Like Prof. Saintsbury. Accordidng to him the introduction of verse paragraphisMilton's greatest contribution to the English Ars Poetica.[49]

T.S. Eliot points out.

"On the subject of Milton's versification, so far as I am aware, little enough has been written. We have Johnson's essay in the Rambler-which deserves more study it has received, and we have a short treatise by Robert Bridge on Milton's Prosody. I speak of Bridges with respect, for no poet of our time has given such close attention to prosody as he. Bridges catalogues the systematic irregularities which give perpetual variety to Milton's verse, and I can find no fault with his analysis. But, however, interesting these analyses are, I do not think that it is by such means that we gain an appreciation of the peculiar rhythm of a poet. It seems to me also that Milton's verse is especially refractory to yielding up

its recrets to examination of the signle line. For his verse is not formed in this way. It is the period, the sentence and still more the paragraph that is the unit of Milton's verse, and emphasis as the line structure is the mininus necessary to provide a counter-pattern to the period structure. It is only in the period that the wave-length of Milton's verse is to be found : It is his ability to give a perfect and unique pattern to every paragraph, such that the fall beauty of the line is found in its context and his ability to work is larger musical unity than any other poet-that is to me the most conclusive evidence of Milton's supreme mastry. The peculiar feeling almost a physical sensation of a breathless leap, communicated by Milton's long periods and by his alone is impossible to procure from rhymed verse. Indeed, this mastery is more conclusive evidence of his intellectual power, than is his grasp of any ideas that he borrowed or invented. To be able to control so many words at once is the token of a mind of most exceptional energy."[50]

In Milton's verse-paragraph the sense is suspended through the ofter line and by avoiding coincidence of the torical pauses with line, Milton succeeded in giving the continuity of Rhythm to

his blank verse which enabled him to construct verse-paragraph. To every paragraph has been given perfect and unique pattern and the face beauty of a line in Milton can be felt in its proper context.

Cyril Addred remarks :-

"Chief characteristic of Milton's blank verse, however and one that has been made much of by the imagist poets, after it had been pointed out by the late Prof. Saintsbury, is the verse-paragraph. Blank verse, which consists of iambic pentameters ows its flexibility to the use of the caesura, or pause, which occurs naturally in a line of any length. Writer of blank verse before Marlowe had made the pause regularly at the end of each line and every line consisted of a succession of strictly iambic poet. This produced a monotonous effect, as the following passage from Nortan and Sackvilles "Gorboduc" shows :-

"Ne then the fiery steeds did draw the flame
With wilder random through the kindled skies
Thou traitorous counsed now will whirl about
The youthful heads of these unskillful kings
But I have of their Father well inform;

The growing mischiefs, while they yet are green"

Marlow made this verse form more flexible by varying the rhythm of the lines and making the caesure come-more naturally:

"Was the face that launched a thousand slips,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen make me immortal with a kiss
Her lips suck forth any soul: see where it flies
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again,
Here will I dwell, for Heaven be in these lips,
And all is dross that is not helena."

With Shakespeare, blank verse reached its highest stage of development. The caesure is shifted at will, coming sometimes at the end of line, more frequently in the middle, and often with great dramatic effect. Iambic lines should close on the fifth accounted syllabable, but in dramatic blank verse are or even the unstressed were commonly added. This gave rapidity and variety to the metre.

The miserable change now at any end
Lament nor sorrow at; but please your thought,
In feeding them with those my former fortunes,

Wherein I lived, the greatest prince O the world,
The noblest; and do now not barely die,
Not cowardly put off my helment to
My country men, A Roman by a Roman,
Valiantly vanquished now my spirit is going
I can no more."[51]

Milton in 'Paradise Lost' classifises this English blank verse form by religiously eschewing the extra syllables and by his use of the verse-paragraph. An examination of the poem will show that Milton expresses his idea in cyclic combinations of lines which are entirely held together by the harmonic effect and therefore defy crude analysis by scansion. As Masson says, the music must be allowed to arise out of the line as it is read naturally. And Milton's verse-classical in the sense that Racine is classical is read naturally only when it is declaimed aloud in the same ways as it was composed. The caesura is used most commonly by Milton after the third foot and is what he means in the preface by "th sense variously drawn out from one line of verse in to another."[52] He further says : "It remains to be examine what he means by "apt numbers" and 'fit quantity

of syllables' by the former he means the sound fitting the sense--in other words those one mato poeic effects which he achieves by alliteration and rhythm (e.g. Book X, II 521-532) By "fit quality of syllable."[53]

Milton only says what has already been emphasised, that the verse should be spoken naturally and words not made to bear an alien account through the demands of metre. In this connection it is note-worthy that in 1645, in this Sonnet to Henery Lawes the musician, Milton had addressed him as "Harry, whose tuneful and well-measured song :

> First taught our English how to span
> Words with just note and account, not to scan
> With Midas ears committing short and long."[54]

In the end he points out :

Paradoxically, while Milton in his use of the verse- paragraph introduced a new flexibility into long narrative verse he also hardened it into a form which others have found ironbond and intractable. "Milton takes non-dramatic blank verse in hand once for all and introduced into it order, proportion and finish which dramatic blank verse had then lost." The rejuvenation,

in fact, proved an embalment and remained so for a very long time. Later innovators in seeking to break away from Milton have tended to lapse into banality and bathos'

SOUND AND SENSE ARE INSEPARABLE

According to Eliot that there is a fundamental disunity of effect in paradise lost and that to extract everything possible from the Poem. He points out "It would seem necessary to read it in two different ways. First solely for the sound and second for the sense."[55] But Milton shows full command over the selection of words which have relation to the sense. He adjusts the sound to the sense. No one can miss the contrast between the opening of the gates of Heaven and the opening of those in Hell, The gates of Heaven open with a sweet harmonius sound:

> "Heaven opened wide
> Her ever-dusing gates, harmonious sounds,
> On golden hings moving"[56]

The gates of Hell open with a harsh jarring sound:

> On a sudden open fly
> With impetuous recoil and jarring sound

The infernal doors, and on their lings grate

Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook of Erebus"[57]

When Milton describes the manner in which Satan is over-powered by emotion, and finds difficulty in controlling his voice sufficiently to address his fellow angels, he expresses his feeling in the line:

"Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth, at last."[58] This line breaks at four places- Tears, weep, fourth at last. The words and the pauses splendidly present the broken and Jorky speech of a person who is trying to speak under the influence of strong emotion. Again when Milton describes the blast from the angel's trumpets, he select a series of long, drawn-out vowel soundis.

"Sonosous metal blowing martial sounds."[59] Here the line is continuous and without break, but the fullness of the vowel sounds prolongs and slows up the line, giving the exact impression of a sustained series of notes on a trumpet. There is love not only correspondable of rhythm to sense-but also sound to sense. Thus in Milton sound and sense are in-separable and now here

does he seems to be delighting in the beauty of the sound for its own sake. Eliot praises Milton's emphasis on the sound in these words:

"The emphasis is on the sound, not the vision, upon the word, not the idea, and in the end it is the unique verification that is the most certain sign of Milton's intellectual mastership."[60]

But it is not so as Eliot points out. Milton's sound and sense are complementary to each other. It can not be separated as Helen Derbishire, in her meticulous edition of Milton's poem remarks: "To Milton --- every sound syllable counted, every pause or silence between sounds. Never has a poet known better than he that sound expresses sense."[62]

The following three lines (with only one disyllable) express forcibly the difficulty of Satan's journey and his determination to over come all obstacles :

"Ore bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense,
with head, land, wings, or feet pursues his ways,
And swims or sinks, or walks or creeps or flyes."

one of the finest examples of the sound echoing

sense.[62] and of the complex patterns of Milton's music is provided by the following lines from the Book II of Paradise Lost.

But first whom shall we send.

MOVEMENT

Milton's blank verse is marked with a sure movement. The verse has dynamic equalities. As Raleigh remarks:[63]

"Every well-marked type of blank verse has a natural gait or movement of its own, which it falls into during its ordinary un-inspired moods. Tennyson's blank verse, when it is not carefully guarded and varied, drops into a kind of fluent sign-song. Milton's verse, even in its least admirable passages does not sing, nor trip with regular alternate stress; its movement suggests neither dance nor song, but rather the advancing march of a body of troops skilfully handled, with incessant changes in their disposition as they pass over broken ground. He can furnish them with wings when it so pleases him. No analysis of his prosody can explain the wonders of his workmanship."

In the view of De Quincy the movement of

his verse is like "slow planetary wheeling having double motion, viz (1) The natural movement of the line and (2) its movement with reference to a group of lines. But the movement is always there and there is the march of events."[64]

ARCHITECTONIC QUALITY

Architectonic quality is found in the poetry of Milton for which he has been highly praised. There is a harmonious effect produced by the run on lines. A complete picture is built up for the single line is not Milton's unit. It is the period, the sentence; and still more the paragraph that is the unit of Milton's verse. It is because of this that the architectonic quality of his verse is produced.

MILTON'S USE OF SIMILES AND METAPHORS

One of Milton's most characteristic literary devices is his use of similes. Milton frequently make use of short and long similies to produce a number of effects leverally or collectively. The theme he chose for his Paradise Lost was super human and super sensous which no human mind could directly conceive or comprehend. Therefore Milton was obliged to make his images and sentiments tangible and comprehensible to the reader by making

a judicious use of similies both positively and negatively. Thus similies are an important adjunct of an epic poem. Epic similes are decorative, elaborate and rich in pictorial details. Epic similes are mostly decorative and have primarily interpretative character. Homer and Virgil were the masters of epic similes. Milton was not in any way inferior to them in his art. He made use of Homeric similes, which in their largeness and perspective, were in perfect accord with the dignity of an epic poem.

Milton's similes are elaborate, well planned and suggestive. He employes similes to introduce things familiar and contemporary into the remote and majestic theme of his poem. But he also uses them to introduce the whole unto Eden, all later history into the beginning of the world, all the varied glories of the art and war. Poetry and legend into an action which was only partly human and provided no scope at all for any human activities except for the most primitive order."

TWO FOLD SIMILES

His similes are two fold. Some of the similes are small while others are grand and have

been described as the humeric similes. In a homeric similes the object with which a thing is compared grows to such an extent that is eclipses the thing which is compound. If we take the first extended description of Satan in Book I which emphasises his gigantic size.

"Thus Satan taking to his nearest mate
With head up lift above the wave and eyes
That sparkling blazed his other parts besides,
Prove on the flood, extended long and large.
- lake"[65]

Thus Milton develops old mariners 'fish-stories of a sea creature larger even than the whale, which had been often mistaken by pilots for an island against which they tried to move their boats. Only after eight lines of such details do we return to Satan who is being compared with these things-so stretched out, hugh in length the Arch-field lay. It is about such similes that Dr. Johnson said that amplitude is the excellence of Mitonic similes. As he says:

"His similes are less numerous, and move various, than those of his predecessors. But he does not confine himself with limits of rigorous

comparison; his great excellence is amplitude and he expands the adventition image beyond the dimensions which the occasion required. Thus comparing the shiled of Satan to the Orb of the moon-he crowds the imagination with the discovery of the telescope and all the wonders which the telescope discovers."[66]

T.S. Eliot argues that Milton's similes tend to distract us from the real, subject, at the same time he praises the happy introduction of such .extraneous matter as in the-simile of the whale. But he claims that as Milton recalls us just in time; the diversion strengthens instead of weekening the passage As:

> Angels form, who lay instransit
> Thick as Autuminal Leaves that strow the Brooks
> In vallamabrosa, where the Etrunian sheds
> High over arch imbowr; or scathered sedge
> A float, when with fierce winds orian armed
> - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - change.[67]

The angels are appropriately compared to dead leaves because both lie scattered on the water by decay and loss of vitality. Kennith Muir points out, that in the lines about vallambrosa, Milton

was referring to something he had seen on his Italian journey but he was also alluding to a well-known simile in Aenled VI, describing the flocking of the ghosts in the under world. Virgil's lines were echoed by Dante with inferno. "This allusion to two Hell-scenes in previous epics enables Milton to recall to the reader once again the plave of the peom in the European epic-tradition and by the specific reference to a place he had visited he makes the simile something more than a mere echo."[68]

In the second simile Milton's imagination takes to him to one of the most familiar stories in the old testament, the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, pursued by Pharoah where Chariots and horsemen lay floating confusedly in the waves behind them. The reference to this episode of the Red Sea is a reminder that the Rebel angels are evil and that God is omnipotent and both they and Pharaoh's troops have been a more exp-anded comparison of the fallen angles to the plagure of Locusts called up by Moses. The fact that the angels are numberless is suggested by the limited the comparison is with the numbered throng of plying pests that descended upon the

land. First stufied on the take, then flying upon their wings, the legions of Satan reach the shore.

Some critics have critised Milton's similes on the ground that these do not present before us a distinct picture of the object. F.R. Leavis if of the opinion "Milton's similes do not focus our preception of the relevant, or sharpen definition in any way."

The other critics of Milton's similes is that they seem to be the out come of his love for pedantry. The first criticism (of leaves) is contenable because the short similes of Milton are as clear as the similes can be. So far as the long similes are concerned, they undoubtedly show the poets wide learning, but it would be wrong to say that he introduced them in his epic just for a display of his learning. By means of the long epic simile, he was able to bring within the compass of the poem a wider range of experience-literacy, mythological, geographical, cosmological. So C. Levis has rightly pointed out that Milton's ransacking heaven and earth for his similes is not for display but guiding

our imagination into the channels where the poet wishes them to flow. "A great deal of what is mistaken for pedantry is Milton (we hear too often of his immense learning) is in reality evocation, if Heaven and Earth are ransacked for similes and allusion, this is not done for display, but in order to guide our imaginations with unobtrusive pressure into the channel where the poet wishes them to flow: the learning which a reader requires in responding to a given allusion does not equal the learning Milton needed to find it."[70]

Milton's similes serve another significant purpose in the epic, the theme of which is far remote from the common experience of mankind. They introduce the human element in the world created by the poets lofty imagination. In the words of Bailey. "By their assistance he gives rest to the imagination exhausted by the sublimity of heaven and hell, bringing it home to its own familiar earth, to scenes whose charm, unlike that of Eden or Pandemonium, lies not in the wonder their strangencies excites but with old habits expances and memories which may recall. So, after the strain of the great debate with which the second book opens, he soothes us with the beautiful

simile of the evening after storm:

"Thus they their doubtful consultation done
Ended rejoicing in their matchless chief,
As, when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the North-wind seeps,O'er spread,
Heaven's cheerful face, the housing element
Scowls over the darkened landslip-snow or shower
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet,
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renoew, and bleating berds
Attest their joy, that hell and Valley rings."[71]

By means of the simile of the evening with the end of consultation of the friends. Milton has used the classical method of appeal to universal knowledge and feeling, and not the romantic method of strangeness of sentiment and detailed particularty of truth. In this way Milton makes his call on the thoughts and emotions, not of eccentric or exceptional individuals, but of men and women of all times and nations.

Milton also drew highly effective and suggestive similes from contemporary social and political life. Such similes were naturally more easily comprehensible to his readers than those

drawn from classical source. When Satan leaps over the walls of Paradise, the simile begins thus:

As when a prowling world,
When hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
In hurdled cotes amid the field-secure
Leeps over the fence with ease into the folds;
Or as a thief bent to unheard the cash
Of some richer burger, when substantial door,
Cross-barred and bottled fast, fear no assault,
In at the window climbs or over the Tiles:
So climb this first grand thief into God's fold
So since into his Church lewd hire lings climb.[72]

But the most characteristic Miltonic simile is the epic simile . It is maintained by certain critics that Milton was the inventor of such epic similes. These epic similes have the quality of super-human permanence and vastness about them. They create an unmistakable impression of greatness- and sublimity. Milton draws these long epic similes from classical mythology, natural sciences and the vasted incomprehensible forces and phenomena of nature. Thus comparing the shield of Satan to the orb of the Moon, he crowds the imagination with the discovery of the telescope and all the

wonders which the telescope discovered at time :

His ponderous shiedl,
Ethernal temper, massy, large, and sound,
Behind his cast. The broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan Artist views
At evening from the top of Fesole,
Or in valdarno, to desery new lands,
Rivers, or mountains in her spotting globe.[73]

In the conclusion of this discussion of the use of similes in Paradise Lost, it should be pointed out their absence in the later books, particularly the books given over to the discourse of Raphael accounts for the comparative dullness of these books.

MILTON'S BLANK VERSE, VARIED AND FLEXIBLE

Actually the verse in Samsan Agonistes is of two kinds: blank verse for the dialouges: and a combination of blank verse and rhymed lyric verse fo the choruses and for certain monologues in his use of blank verse, Milton is very fertile in the methods which he adopts to avoid monotony. His blank verse is extremely varied and flexible.

In fact, it is much more subtle than it appears. For instance, the following passage illustrate the variety in Milton's use of this metre.

> Myself: My conscience and internal peace,
> Can they think me so broken, so defused,
> With corporal servitude, that my mind ever
> Will condescend to such absurd commands?
> -- -- -- -- --
> I will not come.[74]

The lines in this passage are predominately end-stopped : but in contrast to the end-stopped lines is the strong enrambment, of some of the lines where the sense is carried over to the following lines. Monotony is also avoided by changes of emphasis from place to place. By changes of accent, and by variety in the fall of the pauses. Nor does Milton hesitate to break his lines in the short in to short staccate segments, producing emphasis and bitterness by the cumulative effect. For instance, we have the following examples of this sort of thing:-

1- "Betrayal, captive and both my eyes put out"[75]
2- Dung on, or beggary or decrepit age.[76]
3- Unmanly, ignominious,1 infamous.[77]

Apart from all this the blank verses in Samson Agonistes is highly dramatic. Milton makes full use of all the possibilities of compression, frequent breathing space and strong emphasis.

MILTON USE OF SIMILES AND METAPHORS IN SAMSAK AGONISTES

There is an abundance of similes and metaphors in Milton's poetry; and Samson Agonistes offers a number of examples of the originality and the optness of his similes and metaphors. Speaking to the Chorus, Milton early in the poem compares his mismanagement of his whole life to a foolish Pilot whose incompetence results in his ship getting wrecked. He says that his vessel had gloriously been rigged by heaven, but that he had not been able to manage it properly. Here he compares his body and his gift to a vessel or a ship wonderfully equipped. But the ship had founded red because he, the pilot, did not have enough skill. Later, Manoa describes Samson's strength growing with his hair 'garrisoned sound about his like a camp'. Here Samson's hair are compared to a large number of soldiers who protect him against all attacks. (The metapher here refers to the fact that Samson's strength dwelt in his

hair) Again, Manoa compares the frustration of all his hopes to "the first-born bloom of spring, ripped by the logging rear of Winter's frost". Here we have a vivid Nature-picture, in addition to the simile which conveys to us the failure of Manoa's hope of Samson's release. One of the most striking similes is the poem in the comparison of Dalila to "a stately ship, with all her bravery on, and tackle trim". The simile have constitutes a vivid picture. The messenger, in his account of what had happened at the gams, compares Samson's strength in bringing down the two pillars to the force of winds and waters which, of finding an out let, bring about an earth quake, causing the mountain to tremble. Here we have a most original but perfectly appropriate R Simile. Towards the close of the poem we have a series of three similes each original and picturesque. Samson, attacking his enemies, is compared to a stranger attacking a long number of fowls perched in their nests. he is then compared to jupitar's eagle hurling a thunder bolt on the heads of its victim from a cloudless sky. Finally Samson's virtue is compared to the phonix; and here we are given an elobrate picture of this fabulous bird which lives for five hundred years and their

burns itself to ashes from which arises another phœnix. In this connection, it may be pointed out that some critics have found fault with this intermixing of similes. The dragon, the eagle, and the phœnix are here pictured in quick succession; and this, according to the critics, leads to a bluming of the idea. A fault has also been found with the simile used by Samson when he compares his trouble some thought to "a deadly swarm of hornets around" etc. Here a critic points out that hornests cannot by any means bring before Samson with a foolish pilot on the ground that Samson's having revealed his secret to Dalila has nothing to do with the shipwreck which results from a pilot's incompetence, if we were to adopt the line of reasoning, we could find fault even with those metaphors which are in common use. Thus it would seem absurb to compare a brave man to a lion or to speak of love in terms of a red nose or to refer to the bright eyes of a woman as stars. The fact is that originality is sometimes not fully appreciated. The three successive similes mentioned above actually deserve the highest appreciation, especially because they also bring us a wealth of vivid emagery.

USE OF ELISION AND CONTRACTION IN SAMSON AGONISTES

Elision is frequently used by Milton.

Thus labouring become 'labring' and adventurous becomes 'adventurous'. Similar to Elision is contraction, and another metrical device frequently used by Milton. By all these devices Milton avoids monotony and weariness and imparts a rare flexibility and ease to his versification. As Raleigh point out, "His verse even in its least admirable passages, does not sing, nor trip with regular alternate stress: its movement suggests neither dance nor sing, nor trip with regular alternate stress its movement suggests neither dance nor song, but rather the advancing march of body of troops skillfully handled, with incessant changes in their disposition as they pass over broken ground. He can furnish his verse with wings or make it move slowly as it pleases. His blank verse is the verse of an inspired artist and no analysis of his prosody can do justice to the wonders of his workmanship.[78]

In the choruses of Samson Agonistes where he reaches the top of his skill, Milton varies even the length of the line. "So he has hardly a rule left, save the iambic pattern, which he treats merely as a point of departure or reference, a back ground of frame-work to carry the variations

imposed upon it by the luxuriance of a perfectly controlled art."[79]

USE OF SPONDEES

Virgil was in the habit of expressing himself by means of spondees, and Milton, the most virgilian of all English poets, has adopted it. Thus in the following passages the upward progress of the son of God and hs companion skillfully conveyed by the movement of hs verse:

> The heavens and all the constellations sang,
> The planets in their satain listening stood,
> While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.

In the last line the first four words marshal the great procession in solid array, the last two left it high into the empyrena.

MILTON'S CHOICE OF THE UNUSUAL WORDS :

It has rightly been pointed out that Milton's is the father of that poetic diction which, in the hands of his imitators,1 deteriorated into diffuse verbiage. Milton always tends to choose words which are not familiar with the readers, and which have not therefore become lether lackneyed or stale by repeated usage. The unusual words

which he selects, and the way those words are put together, constitute one important element in the dignity and sublimity of his poetic style. The following lines from Samson Agonistes would serve to illustrate this point :

1. And doubt
   In feeble hearts, propense enough before[80]
2. In to the snare I fell
   of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains.[81]
3. Nor envyed them the grape
   whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.[82]
4. Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise
   Dire inflammation which.[83]

FELICITIES OF WORDS AND PHRASE -

Amazing felicities of word and phrase is the glaring characteristics of Milton's poetry. At every step we come across felicities which prove to be a perrinial source of aesthetic pleasure to us. His appropriatness and suitability of the words and phrases are no doubt of great value. Here are a few examples :

1. So much I feel my genial spirits drop,
   My hopes all flat; nature within me seems
   In all her functions weary of herself.[84]

2. Thy anger, unappeaseable, still says
   Eternal tempest never to be calmed.[85]

3. But come what may my deadliest foe will prove
   My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence;
   The worst that he can give to me the best.[86]

EXAMPLE OF MILTON'S BARE STYLE

According to some critics, the style of Samson Agonistes shows that Milton's power had begun to decline when this was written. But this view is superficial. Milton did modify his style to write this poem because the style of Paradise Lost would not have suited Samson Agonistes if it had been employed through out the poem in a sustained manner. In this poem Milton also shows that he could alter or modify his style when necessary for example, some of the lines in Samson Agonistes are written in an extremely plaim, simple and direct style, such are the lines quoted below :

1. As for this great Deliverer now and find him
   Eye-less in Gaza at the mill with slave.[87]

2. My race of glory run, and race of shame,
   And I shall shortly be with them that rest.[88]

3. Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail

or knock, the breast, no weakness, no contempt.[89]

IMAGERY

There is good blending of images and pictures in Milton's poetry. Samson Agonistes contains several vivid and striking pictures some of which have already been mentioned above. The references by the chorus to Samson's past life and Samson Sown references to that life are series of vivid pictures. For instance, Samson had once walked about, admired of all, and dreaded by all, but himself fearless of danger like a petty God. And now he is fit only to sit idle on the household hearth a burden some drone, and an object of pity for all visitors. The messengers account of the catastrophe towards the end of the poem is remarkable for its graphic description.

THE USE OF LOOSE STANZA IN THIS POEM

Apart from blank verse which is the Principal metre used in this poem, Milton also employees a loose stanza in the choruses. This loose stanza also offers a good deal of variety. For instance, sometimes Milton uses very short lines to break the monotony of long lines. Here are examples of his short lines.

1. Irrjtionaland brute.[90]

2. Amids their hight of noon.[91]

3. Harder to his.[92]

One device used by Milton is known as stochony thing which was originally used by the ancient Greek dramatic. This device consists in single line exchanges of conversation. Further more, Milton adds to the music of his poetry by the use of alliteration and assonance. These devices are used by him in such a suitable manner that we hardly notice them as we go through these lines, becoming aware only of the melodic effects.

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PORTRAYAL OF SATAN BY
MILTON IN PARADISE LOST

BOOK I - II

<u>PORTRAYAL OF SATAN BY MILTON</u>

The problem of the Hero in Paradise Lost has not been finally solved and no one single opinion has been formed on this subject. Before giving any judgement on this controversial question, we should examine the claims that have been put forth for the various characters of this epic. Some critics like Dryden who first of all expressed his opinion that the Satan is the true hero of Paradise Lost and they arraign the wisdom of Milton in making a wicked and pernicious character as the Hero of the sublime epic. These critic consider Satan as the hero of the epic, because Satan possesses heroic dimensions. He is energetic, forceful, dauntless, inflexible in his resolved, and a leader of the fallen angels inspiring them by his indomitable will power and his firm resolved to wreak vengeance on the author of their ills. It is said that Milton endows Satan with heroic qualities. It is in the character of Satan that the poet has exressed his own pride, invincisle temper, lover for liberty, defiance of authority and heroic energy. It is Satan who makes bold and heroic speaches, exhibiting the fiery feelings of his heart, and his belief in war "To him weakness is a crime: "Fallem cherub, to be week is

miserable doing or suffering"[1].

It is Satan who expresses heroicaly the fierceness of his pride and the strength of his spirit, even after his defeat, so that he catches our imagination and holds us in thrill particularly when he utters majestically:

"What though to field he lost?
All is not lost, the un-conquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to sumit or yield,
And what's else not to be overcome" [2]

John Dennis, seven years later, agreed that "The Devil is properly his hero, becuase he gets the better" [3].

Addison made a counter claim that hero is the Messiah As he says:

"The Paradise Lost is an epic, or a narrative poem, and he that looks for an hero in it, searches for that which Milton never intended: but if he will need fix the name of an hero upon any person in it, it is certainly the Messiah who is the hero, both in the principal action and in the chief episodes".[4]

Blackmore opined that the hero is Adam.[5]
Chesterfield agreeed with Dryden that the Devil is in

truth the Hero of Milton's poem; the plan which he lays, pursues and at last execute, being the subject of his poem. A few years later Satan was given a different emphasis by the poets and critics of the romantic age and among them the name of Robert Burns must be mentioned. First "I set as little by kings, lords, Clergy, critics etc. As all these respectable Gentry do by my Bardship. I am resolved to study the sentiments of a very respectable personage Milton's Satan "Hail Horrors, enfernal world. And a few months later "Give me a spirit like my favourite hero, Milton's Satan"[6].

Black went further in defining Milton's attitude when he asked the question why Milton wrote with freedom when he talked of Hell and the rebel angels, in chains when he talked of God and Heaven and answered "Because he was a true poet and of the party without knowing it"[7].

A quarter of a century later, Shelly gave a classic statement to this view in his defence of poetry. As he says: "Milton's Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God", one who perserves in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent, inspite of adversity and torture, is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph inflicts the most

horrible evenge upon his enemy, not from any mistaken notion of inducing him to repent of a perseverance in enmity, but with the alleged design of exasporating him to new torments. Milton has so far violated the popular creed (if this shall be judged to be a violation) as to have alleged no superiority of moral virtue to him God over his devil"[8].

Romantic Poets looked upon Satan as a Hero

In this essay Shelly does not commit himself like Blake but he says that Milton's Devil as moral being is far superior to his God. In the preface to Prometheus unbound however, Shelly called Satan the hero of Paradise Lost but described him as less poetical in character than Prometheus because his virtues are tainted with ambition, envy and revenge. He repeats it again in an essay on the Devil, and Devil, with minor improvements and the addition. "This much is certain that Milton gives the Devil all imaginable advantage; and the arguments with which he exposes the injustice and important weakness of his adversary are such as had they been printed distinct from the shelter of any dramatic order, would have been answered by the most conclusive of syllogism -

persecution"[9].

John Keble, who was not one of the enthusiastic believers in the romantic principle of art, however felt that Satan is the hero of Paradise Lost and thought that the poets posessed a certain kinship with Satan whose portrait he drew with a peculiar zest".[10]

Sir Walter Releigh in a fine sentence remarked that "Satan's" very situation as the fearless antagonist of omnipotence makes him either a fool or a hero and Milton's far indeed from permitting us to think him a fool" (the title of an essay by Sir Rostrevor Hamilton which makes a number of good points) but until Satain is in sight of paradise he is convinced that God is not omnipotent. Then very drametically, "horror and doubt distract/His troubled thoughts" I maintain that he does not doubt that the thesis he keeps arresting till the poem tell us he does; surely this is not an over Subtle theory. Raleigh's remark was emphatic because Milton does want to make Satan a very high flying character, and sometimes uses ambiguous language to heighten the drama. The great line

"who durst defy the omnipotent to Arm"[11].

"We are told at the start that Satan" trusted to

have equalled the most High" and he says in his first words, by way of excusing the defeat of the rebels:

Till then who know
The force of those dire Arms?[12]

No doubt Satan has been one of the greatest figures in world literature. As Encyclopedia Britanica says:

"The prime example of this kind, though it goes for beyond classical parallel and contrast, is the characterization of Satan who is one of the supreme figures in world literature. Satan has on a super human scale, the strength and courage and capacity for leadership that belongs to the ancient epic hero, but these qualities are all perverted in being devoted to evil and self aggrandizement. Satan's character is presented partly through narrative and comment and heroic or-later animal simile (and many of our most vivid, visual memories of the poem are of Satan in his various postures and setting".[13]

William Hazlite in an analysis of Paradise lost, found the character of Satan as of very great importance. he remarks "Satan is the most heroic subject that ever was chosen for a poem; and the executing is as perfect as the design is lofty. He was

the first of created being, who, for endeavouring to be equal with the highest, and to divide the empire of heaven with the Almighty, was hurled down to his aim was no less than the throne of the universe. He was the greatest power that was ever overthrown, with the strongest will lift to resist or to endure. He was baffled, not confounded. He stood like a tower; or

> As when Heaven's fire
> Hath scatched the forest oaks or mountain pines".[14]

Twentieth century critics do not agree with the view

According to the romantic poets, Satan was a hero of Paradise Lost. But the critics 20th century have mostly expressed their disagreement with the romantic view that Satan is the Hero of Paradise Lost. Some critics have explained that Satan's character shows a marked degeneration in the course of the epic. In the first two books of Paradise Lost, Satan is a powerfully drawn character but in the succeeding books he degenerates and he loses all our admiration. John Peter is of opinion that the loss of poetic enery or resonance in the heroic similes applied to Satan shows as important aspect of the deterioration in Milton's treatement of the Devil"[15].

Marjoric Hope Nicolson is also of the same opinion:

"As we read Paradise Lost we watch the subtly of Milton's art as the character gradually diminises from grandeur and magnificence to bareness and final degradation so that we are inevitably alienated from admiration. In the following degeneratin of Satan, we must realize that Milton is as always in Paradise Lost, writing on two levels, a literal and a moral. On the literal level, Satan is a character, a person about whom a story is woven. Milton's basic technique is a subtle change in figures of speech, mutation of the images to which Satan is compared"[16].

One passage from David Daiches expressed the typical 20th century out-look in regard to Milton's portrayal of Satan. According to David Daiches the "whole poem is the story of Satan's inevitable degeneration".[17]

(SATAN IS THE MOST POWERFULLY DRAWN CHARACTER)

Though the pre-eminence of Satan as the hero of Paradise Lost has been called in question, it is undeniable that the is the most powerfully drawn character in the epic and the Milton has portrayal some of his own qualities in him. Kenneth Muir, who does

not agree with Drydon's view that Satan is the hero of the poem however, admits that he is a more affective poetical figure than either Adam and Christ. Tellyard has pointed out that Milton's own heroic energy is brought out in the character of Satan. "There is only one figure in Paradise Lost whose stength is shown through conflict and endurance. This is Satan and it is through him that Milton's own heroic energy is most powerfully shown."[18].

It is interesting to recall that Tillyard in his book "studies in Milton", has described as a kind of tragic figure and has compared him with one of Shakespeare's greatest tragic heroes, Macbeth, "like Macbeth, he inspires contrary feelings, the desire to approach and gaze because of his greatness, the desire to shrink and avoid because of his cruelty; the desire to approach and support because of his courage, the desire to flee because of the madness on which it is based.[19]

Hanford is of opinion that "We find in Satan the embodiment of Milton's will to power. Condemned by the limitation of his own nature to be a spectator where he would be an actor, a man of peace when he wants to wield the sword, a praiser of deeds which he would fain

by doing, an exhorter of other's to a leadership which he feels should be his own, he makes Satan the great Commander-indomitable, independent, ruthless, self controlled inspiring words with him are baked by deeds. The responses which Milton himself could never get from men come to Satan without effort.[20]

> Leader of those armies bright
> Which but the omnipotent none could have failed
> If once they hear that voice, their loveliest pledge
> Of hope in fears and dangers heard so oft
> In worst extreme, and on the perilous edge
> Of battle when it raged, in all assaults
> Their surest signal, they will soon resume
> New courage and revive.

Denis Saurat has come to conclusion after a lengthy analysis of Paradise Lost that "There is a wealth of unconscious poetic richness in Milton, of which the most astonishing manifestation is the passionate unconscious sympathy with the rebellious energy of Satan, and the most attractive and lovely pictures of the sensuous innocence of our first parents in Paradise.[21]

Satan is a vaster and more comprehensive figure

than Macbeth. Macbeth is the protagonist in a very great play. Satan is the classic embodiment of the eternal dictator-type. Machbeth goes down before the forces of good, so does Satan, yet he will re-appear and fight the same hopeless nefarous fight through all time.[22]

Let us see some of the points of his character which are definitely indicated that Satan is the hero of Paradise Lost. In the beginning, it is Satan who first of all the angel arouse himself up from the lake of fire. He has the power of recovery in the face of defeat. Not one world, which he utters, expresses despair, when he discovers the terrible nature of the place to which God has banished them. Immediately his active mind begins to scheme, and he proceeds to resemble his shattered forces. We are often told that adversity reveals the best quality in a man. Adversity certainly reveals the vigorous intellect and driving personality of Satan. He shows the highest degree of fortitude and "courage never to submit or yield". His personal example soon communicates itself to the another angels, and they gather round their great leader. In the plays of Shakespeare we have often seen that the great dramatist contrives to create his finest

characters by letting us hear what other people think of them, and say about them, so it is with Milton. All the angels welcome with joy their mighty leader. It matters not that they have been defeated and expelled from Heaven, because of their share in his rebellion.

They gather round him with absolute confidence such as earthly men feel instinctivly at times when they realise and worth of a great leader. The mighty qualities of Satan's mind and the indomitable resolution which animates him are displayed when he explains:

> --- and thou, profoundest Hell
> Recieve thy new possessor, one who brings,
> A mind not to be changed by place or time,
> The mind is its own place and in itself
> Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven".[23]

These are sentiments which might well be uttered by the most of spiritual character. The spirit of self-reliance, of mental courage, which rises independent of environment, is a quality possessed only by the greatest characters. This might well have been spoken by some saint in exile, or languishing in the dangerous of a cruel tyrant. A fw lines later, there blazes a burst of strong over-mastering ambition, the

expression of a nature that must be first in all things.

To reign is worth ambition though in Hell,

Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven."[24]

It is no ordinary ambition which we see here, there is something colossal in this bold challenge to the Almighty for supreme power. We have seen instances in the history of the human race where two great nations clashed, and neither would give way, Caesar and Hannibal, Wellington and Napolean and we have been impressed by the greatness on either side. It may be wicked thing to defy God, but, in this case, God is far-removed and unreal, and it is the greatness of the challenge, rather than the wickedness, which is prominent impression.

Beelzebub bears witness to the great work of Satan as a leader;

"If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge

Of hope in fears and dangers, ward so oft

- - - they will soon resume

New courage and revive, though now they lie

Grovelling an prostrate on yon lake of fire."[25]

If this was said of the noblest general whoever

led mortal armies, he would be acclaimed by all as a leader of men. The effect here is similar: We must judge Satan according to earthly and human standard. Since we have no other. We respect him because of the confidence with which he inspires the forces. When the down fallen angels reach the shore, their dejected spirits are cheered and their looks show:

> Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief
> Not in despair - - - -[26].

Milton then makes Satan console them, raise their sinking courage and dispel their fears. The poet seams to feel here that he is ennobling the Arch-fiend unduly for he reminds the reader that Satan achieves this by:

> High words that bore
> Semblance of worth, not substance.[27]

(Indomitable will-The most pre-emient quality of Satan)

The first quality that strikes us in Satan, is his unbending courage. Even after his defeat at the hands of God and his fall from Heaven, the ida of submitting himself to his enemy and accepting his defeat is repugnant to him.

"What though the field be lost?

All is not lost, the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate
And courage never to summit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome?[28]

Possessed of an implacable hatred for the enemy and unflinching determination, Satan chastises his comrads for showing weakness by accepting their defeat. He asks them to do evil and therby act to the contrary to their enemy's will.

Fallen cherub to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering, but of this be sure,
To do ought good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to this high will,
Whom we resist.[29]

There is no doubt that in drawing the portrait of Satan, Milton has made the use of his highest peotical powers. He emphasises the hugeness and emmensity of Satan's physical stature by means of direct description and also by indirect suggestion. Milton has never though of taking the measure of Satan. He has given us merely in one passage 'the fiend lies stretched out huge in length' floating many rood, equal in size to the earth-born enemies of jove, or to the

sea-moster which the mariner mistakes for an Island. When he addresses himself to battle against the guardian angels, he stands like Teneriffe or Atlas, his stature reaches the sky.

(SATAN IS NOT DESTITUTE OF MORAL QUALITIES)

It has been criticised that Satan is an evil being and he exists for nothing but for the sake of sinfulness and it is also said about Satan that he lacks moral qualities. But it is not so, the most admirable feature of his character is brought out as the leader of the fallen angels. He is universally respected because he is always prepared to sacrifice his personal good for the sake of general welfare. He is so full of sympathy and affection that when he stands to speak to his followers, he is filled with feeling of compassion to such an extent that he is not able to restrain his tears. It has rightly been pointed out that at this place the most sublime stroke in the poem occurs:

> He now prepared
> To speak, where at their doubled ranks they bend
> From wing to wing, and half enclose his sound
> With all his peers, attention held them mute
> Thrice he assayed and thrice inspite of scorn,

Tears such as angels weep, burst forth at last
Words intervore with sighs found out their way.[30]

(Satan's speech produces the most instantaneous effect on his followers).

Satan produced powerful effect on his followers through his effective speech and Milton has used a very fine simile to describe it. Satan's stirring words make the fallen angels ashamed of their sloth and weakness. When the need of going on insearch of the new place where the new creation of God lives arises, Satan takes this burden on himself. As a real leader, he feels that he showed not only enjoy greater power than his followers but showed also bear greater responsibility. When the proposal to take perilous steps is made, all the fallen angels sit mute, pondering the danger with deep thoughts but Satan stands up and decides to go to that unknown region. His own words in accepting this task bring out the essential greatness of Satan as leader:

But I should ill become this throne, o peers
And this imperial soveranty adorned
With splendour,armed with power,if aught propose
proposed

And judged of public moments in the shape
Of difficulty or danger could deter
Me from attempting, wherefore do I assume
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as a great a share
Of Lazard more as he above the rest
High honoured sits.[31]

(THE CHARACTER OF SATAN SHOWS A GRADUAL DECLINE)

Many of the twentieth century critics do not hold the view of the Romanties i.e. Satan is the hero of Paradise Lost. They think that the poet has not identified himself with Satan and that in the epic Satan shows a gradual and continual decline. Among the critics who hold such a view mention must be made of C.S.Lewis: "from hero to general, from general to politician from politician to secret service agent, and thence to a thing that peers in at bed-room or bath room, windows and thence toad tood, and finally to a sanke such is the progress of Satan."[32]

John Peter is of the opinion that "the loss of poetic energy or resonance in the heroic similes applied to Satan shows an important aspect of the deterioration in Milton's treatment of the Devil"[33]

According to David Daiches "The whole poem is

the story of Satan's inevitable degenration"[34].

S.C.Lewis does not agree with the view that Milton made Satan more glorious than he intended and then too late, attemted to rectify the error. Other critics, however, feel that in the first two cantos Milton realized that he was becoming too symphatic in his portrayal of Satan. Weldock has pointed out that Milton has inserted continual reminders of Satan's wickedness "if one observes what is happening, one sees that there is hardly a great speech of Satan is that Milton is not at pains to correct, to damp down and neutralize"[35].

Even if it is admitted that Satan's character shows a gradual and definite decline, in the first two cantos this decline is nowhere in evidence. What ever might have been Milton's sympathies in portraying Satan, it is undeniable that Satan's character is one of the most magnificent poetic creation. A critic has recently made this evaluation of Satan's character. Satan when we first see him is unforgetably beautiful and heroic-because he had lost everything and is still proved. It is only later in the poem when we get to know his better and realise that his pride is inseparable from his character, that he was proud even

in blessedness and would be so even in victory-that we turn against him. It has been suggested that Satan's character deteriorates as the poem goes on; it would be nearer the mark to say that the character stays the same but Milton turns it round to show it in an increasingly harsh light. All in all, the portrait of Satan is so flawless and yet so powerful that it strikes one as almost miraculous. Only a proud man could have written it, a man, who knew what it was to be persecuted and to confront his persecutors with pride, and to see the ruin of his hopes and still be proud.

SATAN IS A TRAGIC CHARACTER

No doubt Satan is a tragic character. Stan is a vaster and more comprehensive figure than Macbeth. Macbeth is the protagonist in a very gret play. Satan is the classic embodiment of the eternal dictators type. Macbeth goes down before the forces of good. So does Satan, yet he will re-appear and fight the same hopeless nefarious fight through all time.[37]

(Paradise Lost Exists For One figure, SATAN)

Milton has endowed Satan with all those qualities which make a hero. Infact, it is the

grandeur of Satan's character that makes Paradise Lost an epic. Milton has imparted somehing of himself to Satan, and so. Satan arouses our admiration by the strength of his character and individuality. He asserts himself against the autocracy of God, and is able to win over to his side the third part of the angelic host in heaven. He is, no doubt, defeated by the Messiah, but his defeat and his expulsion from Heaven cannot curb his indomitable spirit. He would urge eternal war against God; he remains as bold in spirit and as defiant as he was before his defeat and the change of his surroundings cannot in any way dampen his unconquerable spirit. He will make Heaven of Hell, and undertakes all kind of risks and dangers in order to take revenge on God. This figure is heroic in every way. He is a perfect leader, and all the fallen angle submit unquestionabley to his authority. "It is surely the simple fact says Abercrombe, "that Paradise Lost exists for one figure that is Satan-Just as the allied exists for achilles and the odyssey for odysseus, it is in the figure of Satan that imperishable significance of Paradise Lost is centred: his vast unyielding agony symbolises the profound antimony of modern consciousness" Satan is indeed a great figure of epic dimension and he is a true hero without doubt. Robert

Burns strongly upheld Satan as the hero of Paradise Lost, in these words "give me a spirit like my favourite hero Milton's Satan"[39].

W.Hazlitt was of the same view "the interest of the poem arises from the daring ambition and fierce passions of Satan, and from the account of the Paradisical happiness and the loss of it by our first parents, Satan is the indubitable hero in fact, the most heroic subject that ever was chosen for a poem"[40]

(CHRIST CHANNOT BE REGARDED AS A HERO)

it has been oftenly said that Christ is the hero of Paradise Lost. It is clear to every reader of the poem that one of the Chief functions of Christ as a character in the poem is to act as the antagonist of Satan. He declares that in the future. he will conquer Satan for ever. Milton has brought out a close parallel and contrast in Book III to the second Book II. If Satan offers to undertake the mission of finding the new world and seducing man, Christ offers to sacrifice himself for the salvation of man. If Satan's offer had been followed by the acclaimation of the fallen angels, Christ's determination is also followed by a corresponding scene of jubillee:

Lowly reverent

Towards eitheer throne they bow and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast their crowns."[41]

Most critics have nothing but admiration for Milton's portrayal of Christ. Though Milton's portrayal of God is defective his portrayal of Christ is singularly free from such a blemish.

In the words of John Peter "It is something of a puzzle to see why and Arian like Milton should have given such dignity and refinement in comparison with the father to the son"[42]. The same writer who has vigorously criticised Milton's portrayal of God, described Christ as a "friend to man, foe to God". Empson forgives Christ and remarks "Even if we call the son (Christ) a simple minded hero, we do not feel that it is to his discredit. The son regularly talks like young medieval aristocrat eager to win his spurs".[43]

It should, however, be remarked that with all the admirable portrait of Christ by the poet he cannot be described as the hero of the poem and modern crictical opinion regards Adam as the hero of the poem". The hailing of the son by the angelic lost makes

it clear that in a purely formal sense-but in a purely formal sense-he is the hero of the poem. It is he who by voluntarily offering himself to be in Adam's room, enables God to bring good out of evil. Yet he plays for too small a part in Paradise Lost to be th real hero. One must distinguish, as so often in the poem, between the orert intention and the underlying poetic meaning. According to the overt intention, Christ is the hero and Adam merely the object of conflicct between God and Satan--the troy of this epic but such an interpretation is contradicted at every point; ultimately in terms of the fully realized poetic meaning. Adam is the hero; his and Eve's recovery and their going out, in the end to face an uncertain and resting future constitute the final heroic act.[44]

(IS MILTON THE HERO OF HIS EPIC)

Milton himself is the hero of Paradise Lost. This theory has been formulated by Denis Saurat, a fresh critic. He says in his book "Milton: Man and Thinker" that Adam is not the fitting counterpart for Satan. Accoriding to him, the hero of the poem is Milton himself. As stated by him "Though Satan is Milton's own creation, and he has displayed a greater force of poetry in him than in any other character in

Paradise Lost as he represents a part of his own mind and character, yet it seems that Milton throws himself personally into the struggle against Satan"[45]. Further he feels that Milton has exalted Satan because he himself wanted to drive out malignent and militant Satan from his own heart. In this connection, he says "Milton had Satan in him and wanted to drive him out. He had felt passion, pride and sensuality. The displeasure he takes in the creation of Satan is the joy of liberating, purging himself of the evil in himself by concentrating it outside himself, into a work of art. A joy peculiar to the artist --- a joy that, perhaps was God's ultimate aim is creating the world, as we have seen"[46].

The argument is not plausible that Milton himself is the hero. No doubt Milton's personality is revealed in Paradise Lost, and he never conceals where his sympathy lies. There is again some similarity between the position of Satan and that of Milton. Satan had defied the authority of God, the autocrat, just as Milton had defied the autocracy of the king. Hence Satan is endowed with all the force and fire of Milton's own spirit. But Milton's own object was to justify the ways of God to men. He, therefore,

expresses himself here and there to execute his avowed aim. The epic, it must be remembered, is a piece of objective art. He calls Satan infernal serpent. Arch-fiend and uses abusive epithet to expose Satan's real character. But Milton himnself cannot and does not take part in the action of the poem. The lyrical quality of Milton's genius inevitably enter into Paradise Lost. But to say that he is the hero of Paradise Lost, is nothing short of preposterous.

It is true that Paradise Lost is full of the references to the poets own personal life but it is wrong to think that Milton himself intended to be the hero in his epic. Similarly the view that Paradise Lost is an epic without hero, cannot be described as tenable. Adam should be regarded as the principal character of Paradise Lost, although as a poetical figure Satan surpasses him. Milton has not followed the epic conventions in giving the most powerful portrayal to his hero, but it is also undeniable that he has used much of his poetical powers in drawing the character of Adam.

(IS ADAM THE HERO OF THE EPIC)

Our enjoyment of Paradise Lost as a poem does not depend on our accepting Satan or Adam or Christ as.

the hero of the poem and though we do no accept as the hero, our admiration for Milton's powerful portrayal of Satan will not cease. We can conclude this discussion with these words of Helen Gardner, "Satan is of course, a character in one epic and he is in no sense the hero of the epic as a whole but he is figure of heroic magnitude and heroic energy, and he is developed by Milton with drametic emphasis and dramatic intensity"[47].

Having made the above observations, let us now examine the character of Satan in detail. Following characteristics have been found in his character which prove him the hero of Paradise Lost.

(SELF EXALTATION AND STRENGTH OF SPIRIT)

Satan was dfeated and lay low in hell, but the fierceness of his pride and the strength of spirit never deserted him even in his fallen state. In the pandemonium he made a fiery speech "representing his pride, and his spirit of unyielding tenacity and courage".

"What though the field he lost
All is not lost --- the unconquerable Will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate
And courage never to submit or yield

And what is else not to be over-come"[48].

(UNCONQUERABLE WILL ANDD FIRST-RESOLUTION)

Satan had unconquerable will and firm resolution. As he could change heaven into Hell, and Hell into heaven. No amount of torture could damp his ardent spirit and his firm resolve to take revenge. He had the firm determination to take revenge against the author of all the wrongs. He inspired his fallen comrades with his determination and resolved to be ready for another war with the human race. He said:

"Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwell, Hail horror, hail
Infernal world that thou profoundest Hell
Receive thy new possessor, one who brings,
A mind not to be changed by place or time,
The mind in its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven"[49].

EVIL MINDED

Satan was the spirit of wickedness and evil. To do injury to the happy Adam and Eve was the motto of his life after his fall.

"To do aught good never will our task
But ever to do ill our sole delight."[50]
"Farėwell, remorse. All good to me is lost

Evil, be thou my God; By thee at least
Divided empire with Heaven's king I hold"[51].

BELIEF IN STRENGTH

Satan believed in strength and bravery. He was never a coward or a weak-kneed angel, like Milton he believed in the gospel of strength. He inspired his followers to muster courage and drive out all feeling affeminacy and weakness from their minds.

Fallen cherub, to be weak is miserable
Doing or suffering."[52]

AMBITION

Satan was extremely ambitious and it was his ruling passion to be in a dominating position. He sought to be a leader and king rather than a discriple or a slave. So he inspired his angle with the vision of their rule in Hell.

Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
To reign is worth ambitions, though in Hell
Better to reign in Hell, than to serve in Heaven"[53].

SENSUALITY

Satan was not only an embodiment of pride and egoism but also the victim of sensuality. A sensual

passion united him to his daughter sin. It was sin who made this sensuality of Satan clear in the second book of Paradise Lost when she stated:

"I shall reign
But thy right hand voluptuous, a beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling without end"[54].

ENVY AND ANGER

Satan had a good measure of envy and anger. They were the ruling passions of his heart. He was disgusted which sun for it was brighter than the Arch-Angel. He expressed his envy and anger in his address to the sun:

"O Sun to tell thee how I hate thy beam,
That bring to my remembrance from that state
I felt how glorious once above thy sphere."[55]

"There are the daring and dominating traits of Satan's character in the first few books of the epic, Round the character of Satan, Milton threw a singularity of daring a grandeur of suffering, and a ruined splendour which constitute the very hight of poetic sublimited".

After reading the account of Satan in the two books we are enclined to feel that he is a heroic figure. We endores the verdict of Aber crombie When he

say" it is surely the simple fact that Paradise Lost exist for one figure that is Satan, just as the illiad exists for one figure Achills, and the odyssy for odysseus. It is in the figure of Satan that the imperisable significance of Paradise Lost is centered."[56]

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PARADISE LOST AS AN EPIC
AND THE AUTO BIOGRAPHICAL
ELEMENTS IN PARADISE LOST
AND SAMSON AGONISTES

PARADISE LOST AS AN EPIC

ELEMENTS OF THE EPIC:

Homer and Virgil were the two preat masters of the classical epic. Homer's illiad and Virgi's Aenied have invariably served on models for all writers of classical epic. Milton was agreat classical scholar. He sought to make his own epic accord with technical principles of the great epics of classical detials-incidents, metaphors, similes, terms of expression etc. He dreamt of immortality and he aspired to be one with Homer and Virgil as the author of a classical epic. He gave up his earlier plan of an Arthusian Epic and turned his great classical and Biblical learning to a poem which would be monumental work of the world.

In order to evaluate Paradise Lost as an epic, it is necessary to discuss the elements of the epic. An epic is a long narrative poem. Its subject is so serious and exalted as to merit the epithet universal. Epic in its narrative sphere should correspond to the tragic rather than to the comic in the dramatic sphere. The epic dedscribes an action that is entire and not merely fragmentary or a part of an action.

The epic action has three qualifications in it:

first it should be one action, secondly, it should be entire action, thirdly it should be a great action[1].

In short, the action of an epic should be one entire and great. All these three qualities of epic action are meticulously followed by Milton. The action should have a beginning, a middle and an end. The characters of epic are all high and mighty being. The style and the language of the epic also are, in accordance with subject-matter lofty and sublime[2].

The action of Paradise Lost is one i.e. it has unity of texture. There is a unity of action in Paradise Lost. The central action is the force of Man and everything in the epic, as the battle of angles, the creation of the world is subordinated to this central action. There are no doubt short digressions at the beginning of the third and seventh books, but they do not seriously effect the unity and central action of the poem. The whole action of Paradise Lost is single and compat. In the second place, its action is entire, which means that it has a beginning, a middle and end. The action in paradise lost is contrived in Hell, executed upon earth and punished by heaven[3]. In the third place, the action ought to be great. By the greatness of the action, Aristotle meant

that it should not only be great in its nature, but also in its duration[4]. The entire action of Paradise Lost has the stamp of grandeur and greatness about it.

Milton, in imitation of the great epic poets, opens his paradise lost, with an infernal council plotting the fall of man which is the action he proposes to celebrate. In the first Book, Satan and the fallen angels are seen floating on the lake of fire in Hell swearing eternal vengeance against the race of man. Milton casts the great action into the fifth sixth and seventh books, by way of episode, in order to preserve the unity of the principal action.

PARADISE LOST THE GREATEST EPIC OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paradise Lost is undoubtedly the greatest poem in English language. Not only are the English people proud of this great and sublime epic but all those who read this book are inspired by its lofty massage and its sublime theme. Its certainly one of those great poems which can take its rightful place among the greatest works of human genius produced in different countries of the world. Hutchinson rightlhy remarks "Paradise Lost is undoubtedly the only poem in our language that can be sent to an international exhibition of poetry[5]. Milton has achieved eminent

success in making Paradise Lost as a classical epic. His epic is entitled to take its rightful place among half a dozen classical epics in the world. According to the practise of the ancient classical epic poets, the theme of an epic must have a natural impact or significance, that is, the epic must be a true and faithful mirror of the life and thought of a nation or a race through the action presented in it. Homer respresented the nationdal life of the Greeks, their thought and culture in the world and virgil gave expression to the hopes and aspirations of the Romans in the Aenied. While the epics of Homer and Virgil describe the events that are only national in character. Milton chose a theme that was universal. Milton's scholarship gives to paradise lost a place among the great classical epics of the world. In learning and scholorship, the poem stands on a very high pedastal. Milton had ransacked all learning, ancient and modern which has been melted into the enamel of Paradise Lost. The Hebrew pictures, the Greek classics, ancient history, mythology, astronomy.

In fact, all the innumberable resources of knowledge have been drawn upon by Milton in this poem, so that Paradise Lost remains for the scholar a monumental work. An epic is a serious peom embodying

sublime and nobler thought. There is nor room for pleasantary and fun and light-hearted gaity in a classical epic. Milton's Paradise Lost is a sublime and nobl poem characterised by loftiness of thought and sentiment. Milton has presented in the first, second and sixth books. The seventh which describes the creation of the world, is equally wonderful and sublime.

THE THEME OF PARADISE LOST IS OF UNIVERSAL INTEREST

He decided to write what may be regarded as an international epic, though he wrote it in English and not in the Latin which he might have chosen. The subject of the fall of man was, undoubtedly, suited to Milton's own conceptions of the epic and his gifts as a poet. It is the theme that wins for the epic a supreme place among the works of great genius. John Baily says The horizon of Paradise Lost is not narrower than all space, its chronology not shorer than eternity;the globe of our earth becomes a mere spot in the physical universe, and that universe itself a drop suspended in the infinite empyrean"[6]. The poet rises to great heights from where he takes a great view. The whole vista of eternity from heaven to hell rises before his view. Heaven, earth and hell are alike disclosed to

view. Thus it is the lofty theme of the epic and the vastness of its scope that gives to its important place. The poet's imagination does not submit to any limitations of space and time; the whole history of human race and the Geography of the entire globe are brought within its compass, such as wide scope had never been included in any work, ancient and modern. In loftiness of imagination and magnitude of conception the poem has no equal or parrallel. Its theme is eternity. Its stage is earth, heaven and hell. Its theme is the fall of man and the part that the divine angels play in the life of humanity. The theme is not ordinary one but something unique and splendid. Milton is rightly proved of dealing with the lofty themme in his epic. The poet says that he deals with a theme unattempted yet in verse and rhyme. The universality of theme is a point of special significance about Paradise Lost and Coleridge rightly remarked "We dwell on the excellence of Paradise Lost in as much as it represents the origin of evil, and the combat of evil and good it contains matter of deep interest to all mankind as forming the basis of Philosophy what soever"[7].

E.M.TELLYARD SAYS

The theme of Paradise Lost is less that of

obedience to God than of obedience to temperance, to the rational against the irrational part of human nature[8].

THE CHARACTERS OF PARADISE LOST

The characters of the epic must have dignity and variety. A large number of characters having novelty, variety and dignity are to be found in an epic poem. In paradise lost we have a wide variety of characters marked with qualities as wide and varied as are the characters themselves. In Paradise Lost, we have human as well as super human charactors. Adam and Eve are human characters, where as God, Christ, Satan, the good and evil angels are super human characters. They have been endowed with qualities befitting their inclusion in the epic. Raphael, the good angel, is mild and placid and shows such a dignity and condescension in all his speeches and behavior as are suitable to his superior nature. Michael is regal and lofty, attentive to the dignity of his own nature. Abdiel is the embodiment of fidelity of the angels. Satan is the figure of pride, hatered and revenge. It is said that the portraiture of Satan is so forceful in Paradise Lost that the popularity of the epic and its greatness in character portrayed is due to the character of

Satan. The speeches of Satan are forcefl and have got intensity of passion and fire in them. In many ways Satan stands before us as the embodiment of will, power and ambition, and some of his speeches can serve as inspiration and tonic for week and un-nerved persons. Satan inspires us with his courage, never to submit or yield and what is also not to be overcome. It is Satan who again points out:

"Mind is its own place and itself,
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven"[9].

Besides the character of Satan, the poet presents in Paradise Lost the noble and sublime pictures of the ancestors of the human race. Adam and Eve are presented in their innocance and natural dignity and we find in these ancesators of the human race the picture of our forefathers.

Kenneth Muir says The characters in an epic are necessarily larger than life, not merely in the sence that othello and lear in the intensity of their pasion tower above ordinary humanity, but in the sense that they are archatypal figures belonging usually to a remote period far from identifying ourselves with them as we read 'We should regard them with awe and admiration as being on another plane"[10].

It is necessary to keep in mind that the poet did not deliberately emphasise the features of humanity in them. Eliot's remarks in this connection are significant "These are not men and women such as any we know, if they were, they would not be Adam and Eve. They are the original man and woman, not types but prototypes, if they were not set apart from ordinary humanity, they would not be Adam and Eve"[11].

GRAND AND LOSTY STYLE

The style of Paradise Lost shows the influence of classical writers and it is more Latin than that of any other English poem. In the words of Legouis "The meaning of the wars, the syntax, the division of sentences and the use of the ablative absolute, constantly remind the scholarly reader of classical authors. The periodic style and the unrhymed line, with its beauty dependant only on its cadence and its inversions have a severe solemnity and unbending energy. The work is more full of meaning, denser, more uninterruptedly artistic and more constantly lifted above the level of prose than any other in English poetry[12].

The form of Paradise Lost which has been described as no less wonderful than that of Shakespear

in tragedy, shows Milton's mastery in the handling of a complex material and has extra-ordinary powers of organisation-both of which are necessary gifts for an epic poet. In the words of Donald A.Stauffer "Paradise Lost follows the rules for an epic in its division into twelve books;and Milton is fully aware that twelve may be divded by two, three, four and six. In its great outlines, the poem splits into thirds related to the contrasting themes of the fall of man and his salvation. Thus, the first four books proceed in a straight line to the first temptation of man, which is thwarted at the end of Book IV, the completion of the first third of the poem. The seocnd third is Raphael's revelation to Adam of past events and causes, showing his low he is responsible and how he may live in harmony with God: the eight book closes with admontions and hopeful precepts. The last third of the poem repeats the two themes or actions, condensed and intensified. The theme of the fall returns with terrible force in Books IX and X and this time it is not thwarted. The laslt two books are again angelic revelation and balancing Adam's and Eve's heart breaking despair in Book X is Adam's joyful acceptance of God's plan in Book XII so that he says:

O goodness infinite, goodness immense

That all this good of evil shall produce,
And evil turn to good: more wonderful"[13]

"Then that which by creation first brought forth light out of darkness"[14].

The style of the epic is always great. On the whole, it is the greatest in the whole range of English poetry, fullness of sound, weight of march, compactness of finish, fitness of words to things, fitness of pauses to thought, a strong grasp of the main idea while other idioms play round it, equality of power over vast spaces of imagination, sustained plendour when he soars.

The fact is that Milton is the supreme artist in the grand style and nowhere does he come out so powerfully as in Paradise Lost.

Mathew Arnold says "Milton, of our English race, is by his diction and rhythm the one artist of the highest rank in the greats tyle when we have; this I take as requiring no discussion, this I take as certain"[15].

Milton was singular in his style and has no second as Raleigh observes:

"Of all English styles Milton is the best

entitled to the name of classic"[16].

He further, says that "the carefully jewelled mosaic style was practised very early by Milton.[17]

Loftiness and sublimity are the two words that occur to us the moment we think of Paradise Lost. As addison says "Milton's chief talent, and indeed, his distinguishing excellence lies inthe sublimity of his thoughts. There are others of the moderns who rival him in every other part of poetry; but in the greatness of his sentiments he triumphs over all the poets both modern and ancient, Homer only excepted"[18].

"The style of Milton is the natural exprssion of a soul thus exquisitely nourished upon the best thought and finest words of all ages. It is the language of one who lives in the companionship of the great and the wise of the past time. It is inevitable that when such a one speaks, his tones, his accent, the melodies of his rhythm, the inner harmonies of his limited thoughts, the grace of his allusive touch should escape the common ear"[19].

In this way variety, flexibility, lyric passion, these are qualities for which we may search Milton in vain; and in these matter Shakespeare is supremely great. But in loftiness of thought, splendid dignity

of expression and rhythmic felicities, Milton has few peers no superior. Wordsworth owed much, Landor and Tennyson something to his prosodic genius. The matter of his book is necessarily limited in its interest and significance-but there has been no finer exponent of the "grand manner" and it is impossible to exaggerate the enfluence of his wonderful diction upon the history of poetry from his own down to the day of William Watsan.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS IN MILTON'S POETRY

IN PARADISE LOST:

Milton's poetry is the mirror of his own life. The poet's life and thoughts, his likings and dislikings, are vividly expressed by him through his poems. Whether they are lyrical, dramatic or spic. Literature is the mirror of life, thus Milton draws no line between literature and life. His poetry is no doubt fusion of contemplation and practice, between literature and life. Milton's personality and openions are reflected almost in all his poems from the begining to the last i.e. from L'Allegro to Paradise Regained. In this respect he stands boldly constrasted with Shakespeare who can scarcely be seen and found in his drams;

THE OBJECTIVE EPIC MODE SUBJECTIVE BY MILTON

Milton's objectivity is in strong contrast to Shakespeare's objectivity. Whereas Shakespeare is absolutely impersonal. Milton's rich personality obtrudes in his work and the revelation of self can be noted easily. Regarding the personal nature of Milton's poem, Coleridge wisely observes:

Shakespear's poetry is characterless: that is, it does not reflect individual Shakespeare, but John Milton himself is in every line of the Paradise Lost"[20]. It is the intense gotism of the poet that gives the greatest pleasure to the reader in studying his works. The egotism of such a man is a revelation of spirit and we are delighted to read Milton's work in that light. In Paradise Lost Milton expresses himself in three ways. In the first place, there are certan direct observations of the poet regarding his own personal life. In the secondplace, some of Milton's prominent trails and characteristics are reflected through the character of Satan and lastly, some of the opinions and convictions of the poet are brought forth by Adam. Thus Milton's own personal speeches as well as the indirect utterances of Satan and Adam reveal Milton's personality, character and convictions.

In Paradise Lost, Milton made the objective art of the epic subjective in tone and temper. In the words of Legouis "Milton is in truth the only living being who exists in his own works."[21]. In the body of his epic, Milton has not only given expression to his own opinions and ideas, but he has also identified himself with his character. "He projects himself, his feelings, knowledge and aspiration, into the characters of his epic, both the primtive human creature and the super human beings, whether clestial ro infernal"[22].

MILTON'S PERSONALITY

In Paradise Lost there are many personal echoes of Milton's blindness, republican spirit and his scholarship. The opening line of the III, VII and IX books of the epic apply to Milton's own personal life. The reference to his blindness and the invocation to light in the III book of the epic expresses Milton's own personal life. The following lines describing his misfortune are full of pathos because they come from the very heart of the poet who had lost his eye-sight:

> Thus with the year
> seasons return; but to me returns,
> Day or the swet approach of even or morn
> Or sight of vernal bloom or summer's rose

or flocks, or herds, or human face divine,
But cloud instead and ever during dark.
Surrounds me from the cheerful ways of men
cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
presented with a universal blank
of nature's book, to me expunged and rased
And wisdom at one entrace quite shut out"[23]

Before we analyse the character of Satan into which he has put most of himself, it it necessary to discuss the numerous references to the expression of his personal views. Kenneth Muir has gone to the extent of saying that Milton's dominant intention in writing Paradise Lost was personal. "Milton, as has often been remarked in Paradise Lost not only justifying God's ways to men: he was justifying his ways to English men between 1640 and 1666; he was telling them why they had failed to establish the good society, why they had welcomed back the monarchy. They had failed through their own weakness, their own lack of faith, their own passions and creed, their own sin. God was not to blame"[24].

Among the many passages in Paradise Lost which reveal Milton's feelings, the following passage at the opening of Book VII, is the most poignent. In the

present passage the blind old poet writer of his own situation at the time of the Restoration, who, with all his hopes shattered and frustrated, had fallen on evil days, encompassed with dangers as he was, he could not help hating the revelers of Charles II's Court:

> Standing on Earth, not rapt above the Pole,
> Move sole I sing, with mortal voice unchanged
> To horace or mute, though fallen on evil day,
> on evil days though fallen, and evil tongues;
> In darkness, and with dangers compact sound,
> And solitude: yet not along while thou
> Visitet my slumbers Nightly, or when Morn
> purples the East; still govern thou my song,
> Urania, and fit audiance find, though few,
> But alive far off the barbarous dissonance
> of Bacchus and his Revellers, the Race
> of that wild Rout that tore the Thracian Bard
> In Rhlope, where woods and Rocks had Eares
> To rapture-till the savage clamoured round
> Both Hard and Voice: nor could the Muse depend
> Her son".

Such autobiogrophical passage are irregular and superfluous in an epic, but has not Dr.Johnson remarked "Superfinities so beautfiul, who would take away?[25]

PERSONAL ELEMENT IN THE EXPRESSION OF POLITICAL VIEWS

Milton is a deep classical scholar and the stamp of his classical learning is in every line of Paradise Lost. He followes the classical tradition in the epic. Like Homer, he invokes the Must and plunges direct into the middle of the action of the epic. Milton harnesses all his scholarship in the service of this poem. His knowledge of History, Geography, classical literature and Bible are employed for the construction of similes. Thus the scholarship of the blind poet is a stamp of his personality on the poem.

In the expression of Political views in the poem, the personal element is manifestly present. In the last book, when is lost. Milton seems to be blaming the failure of the Common Wealth owing to original sin. As in many of his works in prose and verse, Milton maintains that only the man who is able to rule his passion can be genuinely free. This is an exaggeration in the remark that Cromwell and his associates served as Milton's models for his portraits of the infernal crew, but it can not be denied that "the debate in Hell would have been lacking in power and verisemilitude if the poet had not lived through the period of the long Parliament"[26].

Baily has pointed out that in the following lines of Paradise Lost Book II Milton's own personality is obliviously reflected:

For who would lou
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through Eternity,
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
In the wise womb of uncreated night.
Devoid of sence and notion?

"It is no longer Beleal who is speaking. It is the voice of a highly cultivated and intellectual human being with all Greek thought behind him; it is in short Milton himself"[27]

THE VIEW IN RESPECT TO WOMEN ARE MILTON'S OWN

Milton's experience of private life and his relationship with women in expressed in Paradise Lost through the relationship of Adam and Eve. Milton's first marriage with Mary ended in unhappiness. When Adam moralises on the unhappiness of marriage and puts the whole blame of his fall on women". It seems that it is the Poet who is pouring out the bitter cry wrung from his heart by the still unforgotton miseries of his first marriage:-

"Oh why did god,

Creator wise, that peopled highest Heaven

With spirits masculine, create at last

This novelty on Earth, this fair defect

of nature, and not fill the world at once

with men as Angels, without feminine,

or find some other way to generate

Mankind? This mischief had not then befallen

And more that shall befall; innumerable

Disturbances on Earth through female snares

And strait conjunction with this sex".

Again the change in Adam's attitude towards woman which makes his admire the nobility and moral beauty of Eve's character, is a change brought about in Milton's own life after his third marriage: The words are infact Milton's words of praise though they are in the mouth of Adam.

"All higher knowlede in her presence falls

Degrade; wisdom in discourse with her

Loses dis-contenanced, and like folly shows;

Authority and Reason on her wait,

As one intended first, not after made

occasionaly; and to consummate all

Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat

Build in herloveliest, and creat an awe

About her, as a guard angelic place".[28]

The whole tone and temper of the epic is, in fact, a reflection of Milton's opinions, belief and convictions. His puritanism and his love for classicm go side by side. It is Milton's puritanism that leads him to choose ultimately the theme of the fall of the Man in place of King Arthur and his Round Table. The theme of the Paradise Lost is based on the Bible and it gives the poet and opportunity to express religious sentiment. This high seriousness of puritanism is woven with the Renaissance's love of beauty and charm. Milton, the lover of beauty, comes out as strong fervour as Milton, the lover of religion, morality and the Bible. Milton makes a deliberate attempt to enfuse energy into the acts of christ and of the faithful angels. As a Renaissance artist he writes a few striking lines in praise of Eves beauty in the VIII book of the epic. Thus, both the side of Milton's nature, his puritanism and his classcism, find their beautiful expression in Paradise Lost.

(SATAN'S PERSONALITY - A REFLECTION OF MILTON'S OWN

It has been said by almost all critics that the personality of Milton is reflected most in his

portrayal of Satan. In certain respects the character of Satan is a projection of Milton's ownself. It may be that through the character of Satan Milton wants to purge of certain of the evils traits of his own character, but the fact remains that some aspects of the poet's character are boldly and barely expressed through the character of Satan. Milton who was a defeated rebel, unconsciously identified himself with Satan who has the pride and egotism of his character and Milton's pride had known defeat, even as Satan's. In Satan we see the coaurage and defidnce which Milton himself fetl when he saw the restoration coming Milton's courage, love of freedom, Republicanism and hatred of tyranny are represented through the character of Satan. Milton opposed the autocracy of Charles I and became a stern rpublican, so Satan defied the authority of God and rebelled against him. Satan's opposition of God is Milton's opposition of Stuart kings, who considered themselves the representative of God by their theory of divine right of kings. Milton, like Satan, met with defeat with the restoration of monarchy in 1660. The Republican cause which he had held dear was lost with the coming up of Charles II to the throne of England, but like the spirit of Satan, the spirit of Milton remained unexpressd his spirit of

defiance, his courage and his unconquerable spirit. It seems that Milton himself is speaking when Satan says:

> What though the field be lost?
> All is not lost; the unconquerable will,
> And study of revenge; immortal hate,
> And courage never to submit or yield;
> And what is else not to be overcome.[29]

For Milton the England of the Restoration was hell. Satan had been hurled in to hell from heaven and so was Milton hurled in to the hell of the Restoration after the good time that he had spent during the Protectorate of Cromwell. The Restoration was the greatest shock that he had received in his life, but like Satan, Milton's optimism continues even at a time when he was surrounded by the forces of hell on all sides. Satan is not discomfitted by his fall from heaven to hell, nor does he losed hope and courage to gain back supermacy and establish his empire. Like Satan, Milton also extremedly optimistic and feels that the Puritan caus would succeed though for some time it may be clouded by the fire of hell. This spirit of optimism which is a signal trait of Milton's character is expressed through the character of Satan who remains undaunted and unvanquished even in the midst of

worries, agonies and torture of hell-lip. The voice of Milton's optimism and buoyant hope is heard in the following words of Satan:

"Tarewell, happy fields,
where joy for ever dwells, Hail horrors, hail
infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell
Receive thy new possessor, one who brings
A mind not be changed by place or time,
The mind in its own place, and itself
Can male a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven||[30].

Milton's pride and his belief in strength find their echoes through the words of Satan who speaks out bravely:

"Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering"[31].

To sum up,Milton forgets Satan and Adam, Eden and Hell, and makes his human escape to his own time and country and to himself. The restoration evils and his own fate are constantly before his eyes when he writes the epic. The Poet's voice is heard every where, may it be through Satan or through Adam. We hear it when Adam, like a weary scholar says that:

"Not to know at large of things remote
From use, obsure and subtles but to know

That which before us lies is daily life,

It is prime wisdom"[32].

And once more when Adam cries:-

Solitude sometimes is best society"[33]

THE EFFECT OF MILTON'S SUBJECTIVITY ON HIS POETIC ART

Now the question arises, how far the introduction of his personal feelings in the epic has effected the quality of the poem. "For one thing it has given a lyric intensity and ardour to the poem"[34].

The objective value of the epic has, however, been considerably limited. A contradiction has appeared between the poets professed aim and actual poetic performance. Legouis has explained this contradictionin these words: "As a sincere believer, he intended to justify the ways of God to men". But he could not do it on the impulse of confident love. He attempted it in speeches and arguments subtle and sometimes sophictical and these are the least personal part of the epic, the work of a pupil of the theologians. An immense place in the poem is given up to arguments by which it is encumbered and chilled. Academic arguing in favour of divine fore knowledge and human free-will leaves even the pious reader in doubt and ill at ease"[35]. Grierson also hold the same opinion

and says that Paradise Lost has almost entirely failed in its professed aim. "The poem does not justify God's ways to our heart and imagination, rather the opposite it is only in Milton's passionate reasoning about reason and free will that God is vindicated. And this is why Satan holds the stage with such complete success. Here, in the early books of which Satan is the hero, Milton's imagination works in complete emancipation unfettered by ecclesiastical tradition or scriptural story. It is not the task of the Paradise Lost to justify the ways of God to Satan"[36].

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS IN SAMSON AGONISTES

Samson Agonistes is supposed to be the last poetical composition of Milton. But its thematic content, concept of heroism and spiritual enlightment Samson Agonistes is closer to Paradise Lost. Paradise Lost and Samson Agonistes start on a note of questioning of God's ways and end on a note of reconciliation with God's justice. Samson Agonistes produces a world of tumuts of agony and frustration, and ends on 'A calm of mind, all passion spent' so one is inclined to think that Milton may have composed this play along with Paradise Lost"[37]. In Paradise Lost Milton says that he will justify the ways of God to

men. It looks as though Milton is taking up the same problem in Samson Agonistes also through the chorus he says:

> Just are the ways of God,
> And justifiable to men
> Unless there be who think not God at all[38].

PERSONAL ELEMENTS IN SAMSON AGONISTES

Samson Agonistes is very often considered to be a thinly 'disguished autobiography' and the temptation to liken blind Samson with blind Milton is irresistable. The piercing, agonising cry of Samson in his blindness is equated with the outburst of blind Milton. The analogy apparently seems to be convincing.

It is Milton himself, who, wholly or in part, speaks through his character in his poems the result is that everyone of Milton's poem contain his own views on various topics. For example, Samson Agonistes is full of Historical and Autobiographical references. There is close similarity between his own carrear and that of Samson. Both were blind. Both had taken wives from the opposite party and both had been unhappy in their marriages. Both had ben consecrated to a noble cuase; and both lived to see the down-fall of their respective causes. Both fell from the conspicuous

positions. They had been holding in their period of glory and were compelled to lead a life of retirement and disgrace. There is close emotional identity between the poet and the hero of his tragedy.

In the opening lines of Samson Agonistes, Samson expresses very movingly, the helplessnss and disillusionment that come to him in his blindness. The careless abandon indicated in the following lines is supposed to be of a personal nature and is very often takes on Milton's own expression of grief on his blindness.

> "O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
> Irrecoverable dark, total eclipse
> Without all hope of day".[39]

"The sun to me is dark,
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night
Hid in her vacant inter-lunar cave".[40]

> "As in the land of darkness yet in light,
> To live a life half dead, a living death
> And burried".[41]

No doubt the lengthy passage suggests Physical as well as spiritual darknes. Samson suffers from the complex that he has alienated the sympathies of God,

that God is no longer with him. He feels the horrowing sense of death in life, for he says:

Myself any spulchan, a moving grave burrried.[42]

Thus Milton succeeds in presenting the world of gloom, darkness and spiritual vaccum that prevails in Samson especially in the opening part of the play.

Denis Saurat rightly observes "Milton is more intimately present in Samson Agonistes than in any of his other poems. Here he has put the history of his own life"[43].

And John Baily has the same opinion as:

"Into his strange drama, so alien from all the literature of his day, Milton has poured all the thoughts and emotions with which the spectacle of his own life filled him"[44].

MILTON'S OWN MISFORTUNES AFTER THE RESTORATION

One of the most conspicuous features of the play Samson Agonistes is that it shows the profound influence with Milton's personal experience in life exerted upon his writing off the play. Milton had become totally blind by the year 1652: and he had got married to marry powell ten years earlier in 1642. By his conviction, Milton was a Republican and therefore

opposed to monarchy. He had strongly defended the execution of Charles I up 1640, and had subsequently served as Latin Secretary to Cromwell during the years of the Common-Wealth in England. After the Restoration in 1660, Milton had been taken prisoner for his anti-royalist views and his anti-royalist writings during the period of the commonwealth. He had ben saved with great difficulty from prolonged imprisonment, by the intervention of a few friends and well-wishers. Nevertheless, he had fallen on evil days. He suffered much from financial difficulties, and the atmosphere in his hours was not favourable to him. Such were the misfortunes that had befallen. Milton: blindness, an unsuccessful marriage, political persecution, disease (gout) and financial stringency. We can imagine how miserable he must have been feeling at the time when he wrote Samson Agonistes (during 1667-69).

MILTON ANGUISH IN SAMSON'S LAMENT

In Samson Agonistes, Milton selected a biblical character, choosing the last episode of Samson's life as the climax or catastrophy of his play. Now during the last phase of his life Samson was living as a Prisoner and a slave in a prison in Gaza. Both

Samson's eyes had ben blinded by his enemies.

Soon after he had been captured by them as a consequence of Dalia's betrayal of him. Thus in his play Milton had to depict the blind, afflicted hero, suffering indescribeable misery and mental torment. How is it possible. Thus, for a writer who is depicting the state of mind of his hero, with whom he has much in common, not t put something of himself into th portrayal of that Hero? Milton's own blindness and his aunguish ovr it are clearly reflected in Samson's opening soliloquy. Samson says that his blindness is his worst misfortune. He finds himself blind among enemies and his blindness, he says is worse than chains, dunguen or beggary. he his only half alive Infact he is more than half dead and he cries:

O dark, dark, dark amid the blaze of noon"[45]

In the opening lines of Book III, Milton refers to blindness and addresss the reader in a direct manner. He mentions his mental agony and suffering that his blindness has incapacitated him from looking at the beautiful objects of nature,a nd the human face divine. It is like the piercing cry of Samson.

Concluding the preface of Book III, Milton says:

||Thus with the year

Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or heards or human face divine.[46]

In these lines we see the regret of the poet on being deprived of the eye-sight. Blind Samson is blind Milton, or that Milton has expressed all his agony through blind Samson; is quite correct.

RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN SAMSON'S PLIGHT AND MILTON'S PLIGHT

Milton had sufferedc a profound disappointment when the Common-Wealth came to an end was replaced by Monarchy in England. All his hopes about Commonwealth had been dashed to the ground. The son of king Charles I, who had been executed by the Puritan under Cromwell, had now become the king under the name of king Charles II. It was natural for the Royalist to persecute the erstwhile followers and supporters of Cromwell and the Commonwealth.

Milton was himself among those who had been persecuted. He could therefore enter fully into the feelings of Samson, the prisoner who laments his failure to have fulfilled the destiny to which he was born and which had been predicted by an angel from Heaven. Samson had been brought by his parents under the belief that Samson was a special being in God's

eyes, and that Samson was destined to do great deeds and also to embark upon the enterprise of liberating Israel from the yoke of slavery to the Philistines. But the hopes of then parents as well as of Samson himself had come to nothing when Samson had become a prisoner feeling helpless like a child. The contrast between Samson's glorious past and his present circumstances is pointed out not only by Samson himself but also emphasised by the chorus and by Manoa. Milton too had been the pride of his parents, he too had at once time been the Chamption and darling of his Country men. But like Samson he too had been betrayed by his own people who had welcomed Charles II to the English throne. Samson's lament is thus Milton's own lament, a lament without hope, a lament expressing the anguish of a proud and brave man compelled to live in undesirable conditions. Milton was so sorrowful on the loss of his eye-sight, a gift that has been given by God, for the sake of the public, but he has some optimistic approach. As he states "I decided, therefore that as the use of light would be allowed to me for so short a time it ought to be enjoyed with the greatest possible utility to the public"[47].

One can easily imagine Milton's faith in God and

in the service he has to render to hic country. Milton has to defend the cause of his country and in its service. Loss of eye-sight is of no consequence especially when it is ordained by God. It is an acceptance of duty with devotion and dedication to the cause of his country.

Milton also refutes the popular belief of his political opponents that his blindness is a punishment meted out to him by God for his misdeeds. He tells his enemies "I neither believe nor have found that God's angry; nay, that he thinks of the greatest moment. I have experienced...His mercy, and his paternal goodness towards me; I acuiensce in his divine will for it is he himself who comforts and upholds my spirits.[48]

This is his profound faith in God. Even in his sonnet "On his blindness" Milton shows the same resignation to the will of God. The parallel between the lives of Samson and Milton holds good for religion and political conditions of their respective times Milton's faith in God soothed and encouraged him, and enabled him to bear his lot-poverty, obscurity and un-merrited neglect and blindness. Though Samson has despair and occasional questionings about the mysterious ways of God; but his invincible faith in God

like the faith of Milton, ultimately leads him to attain the serenity of soul. And so in politics, it has been Samson's mission to deliver Israel from the oppression of the Philistines, it had been Milton's self appointed office to help to deliver England from the fetters of royalty, and each had failed, though the reasons for their reversal and failures were different.

SIMILARITY BETWEEN SAMSON'S WIFE AND MILTON'S WIFE

In the play we also find a most severe and bitter indictment of woman-hood, which has undoubtedly resulteld from Milton's own experiences. There is the portrayal of Dalila into the play. This portraual reminds us strongly of the manner in which Milton's first wife Mary Powell had treated Milton. Milton like Samson had chosen a wife from amongst people who were unfriendly to him. Milton was a man of strong Republican views, while Mary Powell belonged to a Rayalist family. Samson had chosen a wife from amongst his enemies, the Philistines. Samson had been betrayed by his wife, namely Dalila, who had shorn him of his hair and thus deprived him of his strength. Mary Powell had found Milton's home uncongenial to her; she had gone to her parents house after the marriage, and she had then refused to come back to Milton. Milton

had at the time been filled with great sorrow over Mary Powell's disloyalty. He had written several pamphlets urging an amendment in the laws governing divorced Milton had argued that incompatibility between temperaments should also be accepted as a ground for divorce. Mary Powell's attitude had caused Milton much mental torture. Milton must have put his personal feelings into his writing of the dialogue between Samson and Dalila. Samson describes Dalila as a hyena and as a sorceress. Samson regards Dalila as a Monster of iniquity, and as a cunning and decietful woman who must never be relied upon again. Indeed, the portrayal of Dalila in this play is so emphatic, forceful and effective only because Milton's pedrsonal feelings have gone into it.

MILTON'S VIEWS ABOUT WOMEN REFLECTED IN A SPEECH BY THE CHORUS

In connection with Milton's conjugal life with Mary Powell, it may be pointed out that mainly as a consequence of Mary Powell's conduct, Milton had begun to despise the female sex and had definitely begun to look upon women as inferior to men. In his pamphlets he had insisted that man was a higher being than woman, and that by virtue of this superiority, every husband

had a right to excercise full authority over his wife. Now, this view of Milton also finds an effective expression in the play. After Dalila has gone away, the chorus comment most unfavourably upon her and also upon the female sex in general. The chorus ask themselves what it is that makes women worth less; and their answer is that having spent much time on bestowing Physical beauty and charm on woman, God did found no time to bestow any inner and moral virtues upon them. The chorus then go on to say that women are in love with themselves, and that they have no constancy in them. Women either love nothing or, if they love anything, they do not do so for a long time. Even the wisest men have found that women who, before their marriage, had seems to be soft, modest, meek, proved to be most offensive when they became wives. After marriage, a woman becomes a "clearing mischief", obstructing her husband's progress towards virtue. The chorus conclude their speech by saying that God's universal law has given to the man despotic power over his wife. Now these lines are also obviously and deeply personal and autobiographical. The views of the Chorus regarding the general behaviour and the general nature of women are Milton's own views on the subject.

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